THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN

J. K. GIFFEN

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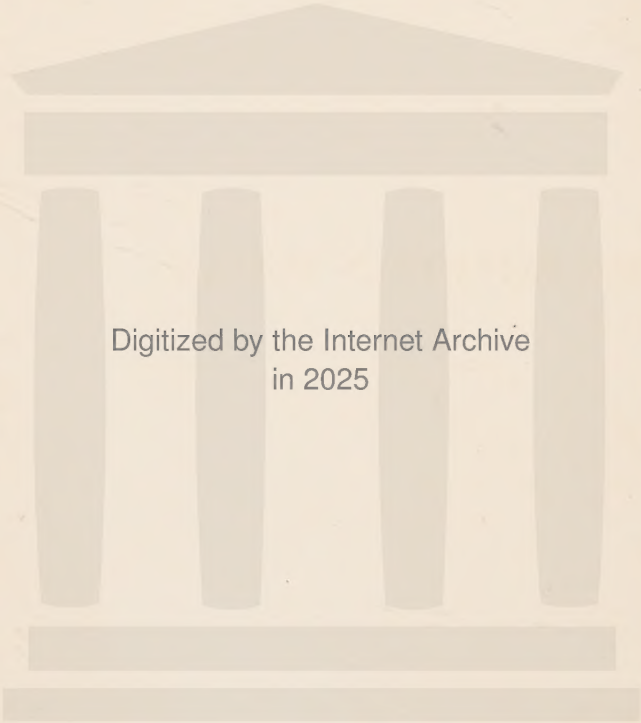
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THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN

STATUE OF GORDON AT KHARTUM

THE EGYPTIAN SUDAN

BY

J. KELLY GIFFEN, D.D.

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PRONUNCIATION AND SPELLING OF FOREIGN WORDS AND PROPER NAMES

The rules of the Royal Geographical Society have been generally observed in the spelling of all foreign words and proper names quoted in this book. It is especially important to observe the phonetic value of i and u: i is always pronounced as in machine; u as in flute. The following table gives a number of the letters and their equivalents:

Letters	Pronunciation and Remarks	Examples
a	*a* as in *father*	Java
e	*a* as in *fate*	Yezo
i	English *e; i* as in *ravine*	Fiji
o	*o* as in *note*	Tokio
u	long *u* as in *flute;* the sound of *oo* in *boot*	Zulu
	All vowels are shortened in sound by doubling the following consonant	Tanna
ai	as in *aisle*, or English i in *ice*	Shanghai
au	*ow* as in *how*	Fuchau
ei	practically the same as *ei* in the English *eight*, or *ey* in the English *they*	Beirut Doleib
y	is always a consonant, as in *yard*	Kikuyu

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Ever since the tragic and pathetic death of General Charles Gordon at Khartum, on January 26th, 1882, the Egyptian Sudan has occupied a large place in the thought and sympathy of the Western world. Before that time, the adventures and discoveries of such explorers as Baker, Grant, Schweinfurth, Speke, or the harrowing tales connected with the slave trade, awakened only a temporary and transient interest in this section of Africa. At the death of Gordon, however, something of the worth and dignity which the world rightly attached to the life and character of that Christian soldier, passed over to the land for which he so willingly suffered martyrdom.

Since Kitchener's victory over the Mahdists at Omdurman, the Egyptian Sudan has been open to civilization, and interest in the Sudan has developed along two clearly defined lines and this interest promises to increase steadily from year to year.

The Sudan has already awakened commercial in-

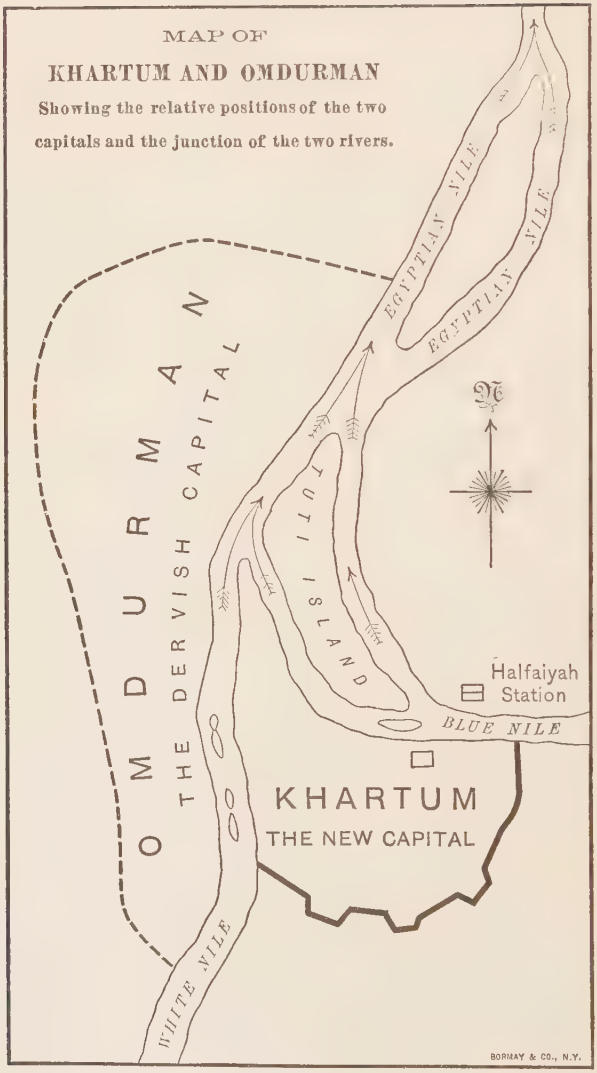
terest. The prophetic utterances of Sir Samuel Baker concerning the agricultural possibilities of the Sudan have already found partial fulfillment in colonization and other enterprises which have been recently launched. The judgment of such men as Mr. Leigh Hunt, whom Dr. Giffen quotes, gives assurance of the Sudan becoming one of the granaries of the world and a recognized feeder for the cotton industries of the West.

The Sudan has also awakened a deep and increasing missionary interest. The sorrows and sufferings which the slave trade visited upon the country, the more recent desolation caused by a decade and a half of Mahdi rule, the strange and whole-hearted devotion of the Sudanese races to religious, though false, ideals, the martyrdom of Gordon, Isaiah's realistic and hopeful prophecy concerning this part of Africa, and finally the present destitution of the land and the largeness of the present missionary opportunity—unite in their appeal to the sympathy and missionary interest of Christendom.

To those who approach the subject along any of these lines of interest, Dr. Giffen's book will be most fascinating and instructive. At the present writing there is a singular lack of literature on the Egyptian Sudan, and it is a distinct advantage to have the desire for information met by one who

is neither an adventurer nor a superficial observer of the facts concerning which he writes, but acquainted at first hand with the country and its people and devoted to their welfare and enlightenment.

C. R. Watson.


MAP OF
KHARTUM AND OMDURMAN
Showing the relative positions of the two capitals and the junction of the two rivers.
EGYPTIAN NILE
EGYPTIAN NILE
N
TUTI ISLAND
OMDURMAN
THE DERVISH CAPITAL
Halfaiyah
Station
BLUE NILE
KHARTUM
THE NEW CAPITAL
WHITE NILE
BORMAY & CO., N.Y.

The Egyptian Sudan

I

THE GATEWAY TO THE SUDAN

Assuan may be regarded as the gateway to the Sudan, for the narrow rock-confined channel is a veritable gateway through which all must pass who follow the Nile into the Sudan, and the beautiful island of Philæ, with its ruined temples, almost seems to close the entrance as we go into the way.

As a matter of fact, Egypt's southern limit is two hundred miles farther south, just north of Wadi Halfa, at about twenty-two degrees north latitude, but for what lies beyond Assuan Egypt cares but little. There is a sort of police jurisdiction over the scant population of the region between Assuan and Wadi Halfa and a periodical tax gathering, but this is about all the thought that is ever given by Egypt to this Lower Nubian province.

From Assuan to Wadi Halfa the Nile scenery is different from all that lies either below or above these two points, and it has a fascination all its own. The river occupies all the valley; only at

rare intervals, in some little cove close in by the great rocks, there is a grove of palms; a little higher up, on the stony banks, are a few rude houses where the people live. It is wonderful how tenaciously the people cling to these desolate surroundings and refuse to leave them. The men go off into Egypt to some kind of service, but always with the desire and longing to return to their own native homes on these barren rocks and sand; meanwhile, the women and children remain at home and—exist. There is certainly not much life, and to any other race it would be a killing monotony. The sun shines every day here, and at times the hills, rocks, and sandy plains are aglow with heat. Still, these are not without their enchanting beauty, for there is a constant change of coloring according to the light and shade of the shifting day. A sunrise or a sunset in Nubia is something one cannot describe or ever forget. You never grow weary of watching it, and the quiet, with the lap of the water against the banks, is like a mother's lullaby, and you fall asleep in the pure, dry air to rest and be refreshed after a manner that does not come to one in the bustle of life elsewhere. You awake again in the early morning when the water, the rocks, the sand, and the sky are all a deep purple. Presently, the sun transforms everything into a golden glow and heat, and

the day that follows is like the day that preceded, and the fascination is the same. The charm of the morning and the blissful rest of the night are full compensation for the heat of the day.

I do not believe one would miss this journey up through Nubia, the gateway to the Sudan, if he could, and there is not much chance of escape. A steamboat, too, is just the thing by which to make that part of the journey. Any other method would be hazardous to one's peace of mind and comfort. A sailboat would be too slow and uncertain, and the noisy railway would not afford the same quiet, nor allow the enjoyment of scenery, as one would be shut in against and among the hills, and be brought entirely too close to the burning, yellow sand.

At Wadi Halfa you are really in the Sudan, but cannot realize it. It might be Egypt. The people, for the most part, are the same, only a little blacker; the shopkeepers are Egyptians; the groceryman and restaurant proprietor is a Greek. Arabic is the common language here; so it is all the way from Cairo to Equatorial Africa. Changes are very gradual. The heat grows a little more intense, and the rays of the sun descend in lines a little nearer the perpendicular. The complexion of the people shades off from white to bronze, and from bronze to ebony black. When at

last you find yourself in the very heart of the black country it comes like a sudden awakening, and you cannot recall when you left Egypt, nor where you crossed the line into the Sudan.

Arriving at Wadi Halfa, you have the sensation of having alighted after a long drive up a steep incline, and you expect to be able to look out and away beyond. You are disappointed, for all around and away beyond is the desert, a great plain of yellow sand. If it is a calm day, the sand is very peaceful and quiet, and the heat is radiated from it in great waves; but if a wind blows (and it generally does blow here), the sand and heat are something terrific. There is an inclination, too, that is almost irresistible. It is to stand on tiptoe and stretch the neck to the utmost, to look out and beyond, to catch a glimpse of the Sudan, possibly of Khartum, but in vain; everywhere the same burning sand and rocky hills. Now you begin to realize that an enormous desert separates you from the real Sudan. What courage it must have required to cross this almost endless and pathless waste of sand by the old caravan route. There were not many brave enough to attempt it.

A series of rapids, the first of which is just south of Wadi Halfa, prevents navigation and locks the southern entrance to the Sudan. It was

the presence of these rapids that made it so difficult to suppress the Mahdi Rebellion. It was the *land* and *not the people* of the Sudan that had to be conquered. The difficulty of travel by river and the great desert on either side of the river constituted a natural defense to the Dervish land. Wadi Halfa was the starting point of Kitchener's campaign, Khartum was the objective, and it required more than thirteen years to enable him to arrive. It was a kind of warfare that not many armies are equal to, for, besides courage, it required a vast amount of patience and physical endurance. The desert was the battlefield and in some way it had to be conquered, for the army needed provision and water. There was continual toil in the scorching heat of the day and not much rest in the chill of the night. There was not much fighting to be done until a certain point was reached, but every day there was this battle with the unfriendly conditions of the land. Whatever honor, and it is much, is due to the determined British Commander and his fellow-officers for their courage, patience, and skill in leading an untrained army on to victory, they were well matched by the physical endurance and obedience of our old friends, the Egyptians. One cannot but admire these on whom fell the brunt of this inglorious campaign and who did not have the

same incentive that must have animated their superior officers. What could these poor men gain by their toiling and suffering? It was claimed that they were liberally paid and well fed, and this was perhaps true, at least by comparison. But what could compensate them for leaving home and Egypt? Not the Sudan, for they would not accept the whole in exchange for ten feet of their native soil, for that land swallowed up every white man who dared or was compelled to enter it. For many generations—so many that nobody could count them—"The White Nile" had been another name for *death*. The criminal and the unfortunate had been sent there never to return. To the ordinary Egyptian peasant, from among whom the rank and file of the army had been conscripted, it was a veritable hell. There was no patriotism to sustain them; to thousands the only glory was an unmarked grave in the desert. Yet without these poor, conscripted Egyptian soldiers, the conquest of the Sudan might not have been accomplished; the demon War might be raging there still.

II

AN HISTORICAL RETROSPECT

Fully twenty-six centuries ago, in the language of poetry and of prophecy, Isaiah penned a vivid picture of the land "which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." He was speaking of what is, to-day, the Egyptian Sudan. He called it "the land of the rustling of wings."

"One whole tile which I picked out of the mud," says Professor Petrie in a recent article on the temples of Abydos, in *Harper's Magazine*, "has an aboriginal negro chief and his name and locality. This proves of particular interest, as he belonged to the fortress of Anu, a people with whom the early Egyptians were continually at war, and the day of whose destruction was a festival down to late times. From this tile we know that the Anu were the negro races of the southern border which the Egyptians had such difficulty in holding back." This too takes us back many centuries, indicating that "the Sudan question is as old as the beginning of history."

In more recent times, in the early decades of the nineteenth century, we find Egypt laying claim to the Sudan. It is purely a claim of conquest.

With cupidity as a motive, the Egyptian flag was steadily carried southward until at last the limits of the Egyptian Sudan almost reached the northern boundary of the kingdom of Uganda, and spread eastward to the frontier of Abyssinia, and westward until it included the kingdoms of Kordofan and Darfur. The government was in reality a system of wholesale robbery. The officials cared nothing for the good of the people or the country except so far as it served their best interest to be good or do good. There was no patriotism in the administration of the government, and no restraining principles of right and justice. Always dealing with a class of people whom they believed to be much their inferiors, and rightful plunder, there were many acts of horrible cruelty committed in the name of the government, but always in the interest of officials. Slave hunting and slave driving almost always led to the perpetration of crime and the committing of horrible cruelties. There was naturally a hostile feeling against the government authorities on the part of those who constantly suffered these things. Then rivalry and jealousy among the more wealthy and influential of the population and officials kept the deep-seated discontent constantly boiling. This, in short, is the story of the Sudan, during the larger part of the nineteenth century.

In 1881 there appeared in the Sudan, Mohammed Ahmed, a native of Dongola, a religious teacher. Mohammed Ahmed was of a poor family, and without influence. His father had been a religious teacher, and taught his son the Koran and writing, certainly not more than that. As his education had been in Berber and Khartum, it is reasonable to suppose that he had heard of Egypt, and had a fairly correct idea of what it was like. He doubtless too had heard of Europe and Constantinople and, in the stories heard in his youth, would have some notion of India and Persia. At best, his ideas of the world outside his own little circle of a few hundred miles of Sudan territory would be of the vaguest kind. He was superior, however, to his people, exceedingly intelligent, and with force of character.

Mohammed Ahmed's strong point was his piety. He was deeply religious and fervently zealous, and hence became a favorite with all his teachers. At one time this same pious disposition led him to rebuke his instructor for allowing singing and dancing at the celebration of a feast. This, Mohammed held, would be greatly displeasing to God. A quarrel between teacher and pupil was the result. The former was so greatly incensed by the presumption of his disciple that he drove him away with cursing. Even in the Sudan, where the daily

paper does not spread gossip, the news of this quarrel spread rapidly, and drew the sympathy of the masses of the people to the pious pupil. Mohammed Ahmed revisited his people on Abba Island, about one hundred and seventy miles south of Khartum, on the White Nile. Here the people flocked to him for his blessing, the blessing of a holy man, and one bold and brave enough to rebuke a teacher for his sins. Then Mohammed Ahmed visited the district of Kordofan, "where the towns and villages abound with religious teachers of the most ignorant and superstitious description." He began to preach and exhort the people. He had one subject and one theme: Our religion is becoming debased and corrupted; our prophet is insulted and every true Moslem is humbled by the corruption of the government officials and their utter disregard for the true faith.

With this sort of preaching he struck the right chord in the character of the Moslem and of all the Sudanese tribes. He thought to unite all in one great faith. Wisely for his scheme, he recognized the general state of discontent and made the most of it. He was a religious leader, but he was also a shrewd politician. He based arguments on the prevailing "hard times," and traced these to the existing government. His astuteness was also shown in the fact that he selected as the field for his

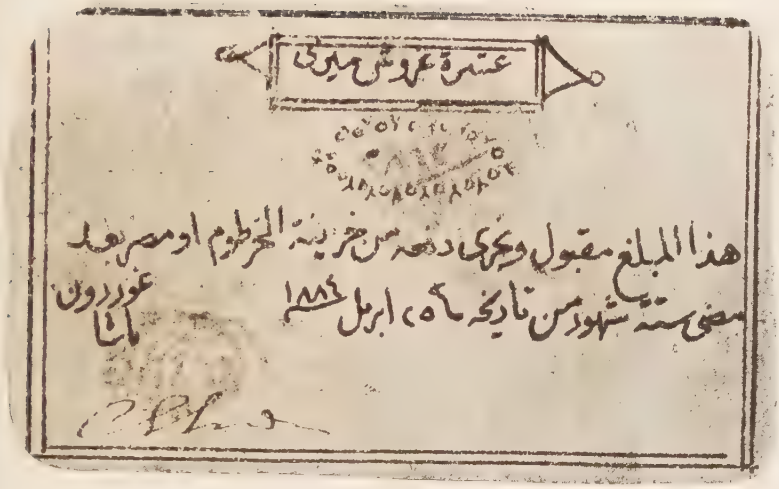
earliest effort the most disturbed section of the country and a section rather remote from the central government and hence difficult of approach.

It was in 1882 that the government began to be somewhat alarmed, but still looked upon him as a holy man, zealous for religion but poor and without much influence, and no doubt easily silenced. The government, however, had already come to be despised by the people because of its weakness and corruption, while the prestige of Mohammed Ahmed was in the ascendency. The spirit of rebellion which prevailed in Egypt no doubt helped to augment fanaticism in the Sudan. When the government finally sent for Mohammed Ahmed, he refused to go. There now followed in wonderfully rapid succession defeat after defeat for the government, and success after success for the Mahdi.

A few troops were sent in 1881 to bring the Mahdi to Khartum, but he and his followers fell on these troops with clubs and sharp sticks and destroyed them. More troops were sent, but these, too, were destroyed. Then came the Mahdi's attempt to capture El-Obeid, the capital of Kordofan, and although driven back with great slaughter, he persevered until, after a siege of five months, the town and garrison surrendered. This was in the beginning of 1883. There was no doubt

now in the minds of all that this was the long-looked-for "Mahdi," or Expected Leader, whose coming is prophesied in the Koran and is anxiously awaited in the whole Mohammedan world. From every tribe where Arabic was spoken and Islam was the prevailing religion, men flocked to his standard. Hicks Pasha was sent from Khartum with an army of ten thousand and met his enemy and his fate on November 4, 1883, at Shekan, a town two or three hours distant from El-Obeid. The battle, or rather the slaughter, lasted perhaps one hour, and there were possibly two or three hundred of the Egyptian army who escaped out of a force of ten thousand.

The effect of these repeated successes can be easily understood. Mohammed Ahmed's claim to divine appointment as the "Expected Leader" of the faithful had been fully established and his prestige grew apace. Meanwhile the Mahdi dispatched letters in all directions proclaiming his victories and his divine mission. He summoned all to join the holy war (Jehad) and promised four-fifths of the booty taken in war to his followers, to whom he gave the name "Ansar"; the remaining fifth he reserved for himself. To all those who should fall fighting for God and His religion, he held out the certainty of the fullest enjoyment of the pleasures of paradise. "Thus



"These notes for ten Egyptian piasters, were issued as currency by General Gordon during the Siege of Khartum. They read that they are redeemable at Khartum or Cairo after a period of six months, from April 25th, 1884, illustrating Gordon's expectation of relief at any time, certainly long before the end of 1884."

"These medals were presented in gold, silver or lead to those who served his Government in any unusual way. The medal bears the inscription in Arabic 'Siege of Khartum' with the Mohammedan year 1300."

MEDAL AND NOTES ISSUED BY GEN. GORDON DURING THE SIEGE OF KHARTUM

did he pander to the main characteristics of the Sudanese, viz., fanaticism and greed." Each new victory was an inspiration and added other followers to the leadership of the Mahdi. Practically the whole Sudan lay at his feet.

By this time Egypt had realized that her Sudanese province was lost. Her only desire was to withdraw her troops, of whom forty thousand were scattered throughout the country in isolated garrisons. To accomplish this task, Egypt called to her aid once more General Charles Gordon, who had been governor-general of this disaffected province in 1877. His was an impossible task and he was left to do it alone.

The story of Gordon's attempt to save the Sudan is a pathetic one. We find him making the city of Khartum his headquarters, then hemmed in on all sides, until, at last, the city was wholly cut off from the outside world. Then we see him, the single Englishman in the city, bravely standing to his post, trying to do the work of a hundred men, baffled by the shiftlessness and incompetency of his officers, making promises until their faith in his word as an Englishman began to fail, and yet inspiring that listless population to resistance for 321 days. * Then we know of the night attack, the rush to the palace, the javelin throw, and " he

* March 12, 1884—January 26, 1885.

whom the Sudanese women called 'the Father and Saviour of the Sudan' lay dead."

"By those for whom he lived, he died;
His land awoke, too late to crown dead brows with praise."

The fall of the city of Khartum marked the full triumph of the cause of Mahdism. Only those who read some record, such as Slatin Pasha's "Fire and Sword in the Sudan," or Father Ohrwalder's "Ten Years in the Mahdi's Camp," can appreciate the sorrow and suffering, the tyranny and oppression, the bloodshed and demoralization, inflicted upon the Sudan by the Mahdi government. Wholesale butcheries and outrageous immoralities were committed and tolerated in the name of religion. Famine followed in the wake of misgovernment, and the population was reduced fully one-half by starvation and wars.

The next chapter has to do with Kitchener's campaign. With that remarkable combination of power, Egyptian perseverance and endurance, and English leadership and training, General Kitchener succeeded in stemming the tide of the Mahdi invasion of Egypt, then repelled it, and at last after a series of campaigns extending over fourteen years, crushed the Mahdi movement and its kingdom. The last great battle was that of Omdurman, memorable in awful carnage. Ten thousand

corpses strewed the battle-field of Omdurman as the sun set behind the hills of Kerreri. But the death of these ushered in new life to the inhabitants of the Sudan. Thus we come to the Sudan of to-day.

III

A DESERT JOURNEY

The journey from Wadi Halfa to Khartum is made simple and easy by means of the Military Railway, although the accommodations of the ordinary passenger train leave much to be desired.

It is practically a desert journey of nearly six hundred miles. The line of railway starts out in a direction that leads away from the river into the desert. Although the speed with which the train moves off is exceedingly moderate, yet its course desertward is so direct that the river, with its fringe of palms and of green, is very soon lost to sight, and all around is a great sea of sand, with waves of yellow gold and rocks of polished stone projecting above the surface.

Ordinarily there is not much in this ride to divert the mind; yet all is so strange that it has an interest of its own and one cannot help but keep on the watch for something new. The changing mirages of great lakes or of green fields fringed with palms relieve the monotony.

It was on this first part of the journey that for

the first time I saw the Southern Cross. I was awakened at about three o'clock in the morning to have a look at it. Even then, half asleep as I was, I agreed fully with Mark Twain that it was not much of a constellation, but later I came to think better of it, for all the starry hosts became my friends in that country where a man's house is for shelter from the sun by day and the great canopy of heaven is his chamber by night.

It is said that the constellation can be seen 183 miles north of Wadi Halfa, but this cannot be with any degree of distinctness. However, going south from Wadi Halfa it is generally visible, some time during the night season, if one remains up late enough or rises early enough to find it.

The night in the desert is always cool and sometimes very cold; but it has been my experience that the chill of the desert does no injury to one's health, unless it comes on too suddenly. Indeed, it acts like a tonic and you rise refreshed. There is a feeling altogether different from what is experienced after a night in a close room. Almost stiff with cold, a little exercise brings a warmth and glow, and the chill quickly passes off.

All night long the train moves through the sandy plain, at rather a slow pace, to be sure, but it moves and you are grateful. If it were not for this railway we would be compelled to make the

journey by camel train or not make it at all; and so, by comparison, the slowness of speed or lack of conveniences are unnoticed, or if noticed they are minimized. This is the philosophy of a desert journey and it is the only way to get satisfaction out of it.

Here in the desert stations are given numbers instead of names, because, as I suppose, there are no natural objects or beings bearing names with which to associate them. At daylight we were at "Number Six," and I find this note in my diary, made while on my second journey in 1900:

"'*Number Six*,' *December 7th*. We arrived here at about eight o'clock this morning after making ever so many stops during the night. The paymaster is on the train and so we stop wherever there are men at work along the line. Each man is paid separately into his own hand. These workmen are all soldiers. Sometimes there are as many as fifty or sixty of them in one squad, and it takes time. At the rate the train moves, one would suppose this could all be done without stopping, but no one seemed to think of this. However, we *expect* to go slow here in the desert.

"'Number Six' is on the old Korosko caravan route, the one General Gordon passed over on his way to Khartum in 1884, when he went to his martyrdom. Poor Gordon! had there been a rail-

way then, possibly he would now be alive and things in the Sudan altogether different. But who knows? Gordon's death was one of the necessary sacrifices in the redemption of the country.

"Our old engine seems to be in a state of collapse and they have 'run it in for repairs' while our *saloon* car is out in the desert. But we have company, be it good or bad. In the box in front of us —we cannot call it a car—are some of our steamer associates, keeping cool on whisky and soda. Scotch whisky, 'made by Buchanan Brothers, Distillers to the Prince of Wales' and to anybody else who wishes to buy. Every few minutes we can hear the pop of the soda bottle. It takes a lot of the stuff to keep them cool here in the desert.

"*December 8th, 1900.* We left 'Number Six' repair shops at about nine o'clock last night, and after going for an hour or two had another breakdown and a long stop for repairs.

"We arrived at Abu Hamed in the early morning while it was still cool and fresh. There is a fine view of the river here, and the beauty and freshness of the scene loses nothing by contrast as one emerges from the long tedious desert ride. There are no cultivated fields in sight, but there is a green ribbon along the river bank and some green islands in the rocky bed of the river."

The next year the railroad management ar-

ranged baths at this station for the accommodation of tourists especially and the good of all travelers, and now it is "thirty minutes for a bath" instead of "twenty minutes for breakfast." The latter is served on the tourist train. There are no longer any "out of the way places" in this world.

"*December 9th, 1900.* We have been passing through an immense plain, which is desert only for lack of water. In fact it is not wholly desert land, for mimosa groves cover much of it, an indication that it is not far down to water. Old wells and broken waterwheels are all that is left of better days.

"The railway runs through this plain with the palms indicating the river's line always in sight. There are flocks of beautiful gazelle in the bush, but the shepherds who live on the river banks herd their flocks in the better pasture lands. Still it is a dreary life in the present condition of things.

"To-day my one thought has been 'why could not this immense plain be brought under cultivation?' This thought kept presenting itself until I concluded that it could be and would be, some day. The plain is perhaps one hundred and fifty miles long, and Shendi is about midway. If some wealthy man of philanthropic spirit would buy a tract or tracts of this land and install machinery

for irrigation and establish an industrial mission, what a blessing it would be to these poor people, too poor and weak and ignorant to help themselves.

"To teach this people to cultivate the land, to build their houses and tend their flocks, and eventually to buy their own homes, would be a work worth doing and a life worth living. No one man would see the beginning and end of such a scheme, but such a work would be a grand inheritance for his children and his children's children and the world.

"At Shendi we were provided with an American engine, built at the Baldwin Locomotive Works, and we were taken at express speed into Halfaiyah, the railway terminus of North Khartum. It reminded me of the donkey boys of Egypt, who allow their crippled, sore-backed donkeys to stumble along all day, but just as they come to the home stretch, with much flourish, '*ha*'-ing and prodding of the donkey, the weary rider is landed with a sort of triumphant feeling, provided, of course, he does not land on his head. In this case, we were successfully brought into Halfaiyah, and our *saloon* car was run out into the desert where we could sleep and snore and not disturb the inhabitants.

"*December 10th, 1900.* This morning as day-

light was appearing, we awoke bewildered, scarcely knowing where we were. Drums were beating (they always seem to be beating drums in the Sudan), and the clans seemed to be assembling around the station, which was decorated with red and white muslin and with the British and Egyptian flags. Evidently something very unusual was the cause of all this stir.

"As we were switched out in the desert well away from the disturbance, we made our toilet leisurely and carefully in preparation for our second entrance into the Dervish Capital. On the clean sand we washed, and from force of habit fastened a stiff collar to a stiffer shirt, and surmounted it all with the regulation white tie. We then had our last breakfast of dry bread, sardines and coffee in the car. For seventy-five hours we had been passengers in that rickety *saloon* car and we shed no tears upon leaving it. The car was seven feet by twelve and we were three persons, with beds and considerable baggage. We appreciated regaining our liberty once again.

"We called porters. Seven men, we said, would be sufficient, but twelve came at the call and divided the parcels and the money among themselves according to their own law of computation.

"When we arrived at the river bank, where the boats seemed in waiting to carry us over, we were

A SUDAN GOVERNMENT RAILWAY

AT ABU SIMBEL

told by a soldier on guard to 'stand back as Lady Wingate was expected by a special just due.' So we waited at a respectful distance and from the top of our bundles watched the surging half-savage crowd. We tried to convince ourselves that we were not in a hurry; but after an hour or so, as the sun became hotter and the sand and dust from the trampling feet became almost unbearable, it took very sharp reasoning to convince one's self that there was no necessity for our getting over to Omdurman at once.

"As the time for the train approached, two hours later, the beating of the drums grew more furious and the confusion more bewildering. Here women danced, there men danced, and in still another place naked children were dancing. There was a general rejoicing, just such as I suppose they had in the days of the Mahdi and his successor when a victory was reported. The driving sand and the heat which annoyed me only added zest to their music and dancing, which was kept up until the arrival of the special.

"As Lady Wingate, the object of their rejoicing, was escorted to the steamer in waiting, the drums were beating a little louder, the men danced more furiously, and the women gave the ear-splitting, shrill joy-cry. It was all over. The vast throng dispersed and went away in peace,

perfectly satisfied. There was nothing but the flags, and the red and white muslin decorations, and a few harsh palm branches to remind us of what had taken place. We crossed over in a postal boat, the *Dal,* to Omdurman."

IV

OMDURMAN—A DERVISH CAPITAL

After the cruel death of Gordon and the destruction of Khartum by his forces, the Mahdi crossed the river to the west bank of the White Nile and there in the desert laid the foundations of the capital of his new kingdom. He was then the despotic ruler of the numerous Sudanese tribes. Some gave him homage willingly, some through fear. His subjects had been gathered from every district and every tribe. There was every form of physique and every racial type that the various tribes of the Sudan afford. There were Christians, Moslems, and heathen. There were those who loved the Mahdi and his cause, and those who professed to, but hated him most cordially.

This despot had many advisers, but no trusted friends. To bring order out of this confusion would have appalled the heart of any civilized ruler; but the Mahdi's ideas of order were really confusion, and it is not supposed that he ever worried much over the matter. Each of his subjects, whether loyal or otherwise, was compelled to become architect and builder and the new capital

literally grew up out of the desert. To this end the gravel and sand of the desert, mixed with the under stratum of clay, furnished all the material needed. There was perhaps never a city built for so vast a population where so little wood and iron were used as in this city of the desert. But for each house constructed there was a corresponding hole left in the ground. These holes afterwards became receptacles for the filth and refuse of the city. This was the city drainage system.

There was no plan, no municipal engineering or interference, no street commissioner, no "city fathers." While there was a "boom," there was no rush for corner lots, for there were no corners. It is only the western mind that works in straight lines and angles. The savage and the Oriental follow curves.

The result of this aimless building of a great city is aptly described by G. W. Steevens in his "With Kitchener to Khartum" written just after his entrance into Omdurman with the army after the last battle.

"It began just like any other town or village of the mean Sudan. Half the huts seemed left unfinished, the other half to have been deserted and fallen to pieces. There were no streets, no doors or windows except holes, usually no roofs. As for a garden, a tree, a steading for a beast—any evi-

With Kitchener to Khartum, by G. W. Stevens.
Dodd, Mead & Company.

dence of thrift or intelligence, any attempt at comfort or amenity or common cleanliness,—not a single trace of any of it. Omdurman was just planless confusion of blind walls and gaping holes, shiftless stupidity, contented filth and beastliness.

"But that, we said, was only the outskirts: when we come farther in, we shall surely find this mass of population manifesting some small symbols of a great dominion. And presently we came indeed into a broader way than the rest—something with the rude semblance of a street. Only it was paved with dead donkeys, and here and there it disappeared in a cullender of deep holes where green water festered. Beside it stood a few houses, such as you see in Metemmeh or Berber—two large, naked rooms standing in a naked walled courtyard. Even these were rare: for the rest, in this main street, Omdurman was a rabbit-warren—a threadless labyrinth of tiny huts or shelters, too flimsy for the name of sheds. Oppression, stagnation, degradation, were stamped deep on every yard of miserable Omdurman.

"But the people! We could hardly see the place for the people. We could hardly hear our own voices for their shrieks of welcome. We could hardly move for their importunate greetings. They tumbled over each other like ants from every mud heap, from behind every dunghill, from under

every mat. Most of the men still wore their *gibbas* turned inside out; you could see the shadows of the patches through the sackcloth. They had been trying to kill us three hours before. But they salaamed, none the less, and volleyed 'Peace be with you' in our track. All the miscellaneous tribes of Arabs whom Abdullahi's fears or suspicions had congregated in his capital, all the blacks his captains had gathered together into franker slavery—indiscriminate, half-naked, grinning the grin of the sycophant, they held out their hands and asked for bakshish.

"Yet more wonderful were the women. The multitude of women whom concupiscence had harried from every recess of Africa and mewed up in Baggara harems came out to salute their new masters. There were at least three of them to every man. Black women from Equatoria and almost white women from Egypt, plum-skinned Arabs and a strange yellow type with square, bony faces and tightly-ringleted black hair; old women and little girls and mothers with babies at the breast; women who could hardly walk for dyed cotton swathings, muffled in veils, and women with only a rag between themselves and nakedness—the whole city was a huge harem, a museum of African races, a monstrosity of African lust."

Again he writes: "Inside of the Khalifa's own

enclosure was even more squalid, an even more wonderful teeming beehive than the outer town itself. Like all tyrants, he was constantly increasing his body-guard, till the fortified enclosure was bursting with them. From the height of a saddle you could see that this was only part of the citadel, an enclosure within an enclosure. Past a little guard-house at the gate a narrow path ran up the center of it; all the rest was a chaos of piggish dwelling-holes. Tiny round straw *tukls*, mats propped up a foot from the earth with crooked sticks, dome-topped mud kennels that a man could just crawl into, exaggerated birds' nests falling to pieces of stick and straw—lucky was the man of the Khalifa's guard who could house himself and his family in a mud cabin the size of an omnibus. On every side, of every type, they jumbled and jostled and crushed; and they sweated and stank with people. For one or two old men in new *gibbas* came out, and one or two younger men naked and wounded. When we offered them no harm the Khalifa's body-guard broke cover. One second and the place might have been an uncouth cemetery; the next it was a gibbering monkey-house. From naked hovels, presto! it turned to naked bodies. Climbing, squeezing, burrowing, they came out like vermin from a burning coat.

"Next morning the army awoke refreshed, and

was able to appreciate to the full the beastliness of Omdurman. When you saw it close and by the light of day, the last suggestion of stateliness vanished. Everything was wretched and foul. They dropped their dung where they listed; they drew their water from beside green sewers; they had filled the streets and *khors* with dead donkeys; they had left their brothers to rot and puff up hideously in the sun. The stench of the place was in your nostrils, in your throat, in your stomach; you could not eat, you dared not drink. Well you could believe that this was the city where they crucified a man to steal a handful of base dollars, and sold mother and daughter together to be divided five hundred miles apart, to live and die in the same bestial concubinage."

This description, to one who has never seen Omdurman, or who does not know the savage races of Africa, may seem an exaggeration; but I believe it is as accurate as it is vivid. I did not see the place until more than a year after the time of which Mr. Steevens writes, but even then there were all these signs of beastly savagery, although in the meantime much had been done by the army of occupation to clear away the filth and relieve the stagnation.

It was estimated that the population numbered from one hundred and fifty to two hundred thou-

sand of this unwashed, conglomerate mass of savages. When disease became epidemic, which frequently happened, its ravages must have been terrible and the conditions indescribable.

The huts were jumbled together for five or six miles along the river front and two or three miles back into the desert. More than half of them were deserted ruins. During our residence in Omdurman it was our frequent diversion from work to walk through these deserted portions of the city and re-people them, and imagine the scenes that must have been witnessed there. Omdurman had a strange fascination for me. At times, however, it was rather gruesome, and one could almost fancy ghosts flitting among the crumbling walls.

The population of Omdurman is made up of strange types from the numerous Sudanese tribes. Better times that have accompanied the new order of things have made a very marked change in the appearance of many of the inhabitants. They are better clothed, and better fed, and manifestly happier than when I first saw them, or when Mr. Steevens described them in 1898. The number of women still preponderates over that of the men, but even this condition is becoming more nearly normal. However, the number of old women and the less desirable of the younger women, who have

been forsaken by their husbands and masters, form a sad commentary on the system that prevails among all Moslem peoples. Elsewhere, perhaps, it is not so easy for a Moslem to get rid of his wives, and it is more difficult to replace them by new ones, but the principle is the same. Here, the conditions that have prevailed have caused the whole system of polygamy and concubinage to show its ugliness. The estimate that men are taught to place upon womankind, even their lawful wives and daughters, assigns them to an inferior place, and brings woman into the position of a slave, a concubine, or a beast. Truly, in the Moslem world "*the whole creation groaneth waiting for the redemption of the body*" as nowhere else in the world.

Then, too, the conditions of the Mahdi reign worked distress for many women and children whose husbands and fathers were slain in battle or died of pestilence. In the battle of Omdurman alone eleven thousand or more perished. Who can tell how many women were widowed and children left fatherless from this cause alone. Every day, in the markets and streets, one meets with some of these and often they show unmistakable signs of distress. It is true that someone may have taken the widow and added her to his already numerous concubines, and adopted the children into slavery;

but this changing of their condition only adds new horror to their miserable lives.

I have recorded in my notebook an incident that came under our notice while living in Omdurman. I insert it here as an illustration of the subject under discussion.

"We have had a woman carrying water for the mixing of the mortar. She is as black as the notorious 'ace of spades.' Her face has reminded me of a mummy I have seen at the museum at Cairo. She has beautiful teeth, and at times, when her face lights up with a smile, she is almost handsome. But poverty has been her lot, and it is clearly manifest all over her bony, half-naked body. She is weak and ill-nourished, and when resting quietly there is a look of sorrow and pain. Just before noon to-day she was standing before the door when another woman, perhaps a little older than she, but with the same black skin and much the same features and expression, came up and suddenly held out both hands toward our water-carrier. Then, without a word or cry, or without an expression of any kind, they clasped each other. They held on and hugged, it seemed to me, for five minutes; their bodies shook and their legs trembled, but still they held on and hugged without a word, a sound, or any other expression of emotion. Finally they sat down on the

ground facing each other and holding each other by the hands, their bodies swaying and tears literally streaming down their cheeks. I was amazed, but the men worked away, apparently indifferent to the tragic scene. Occasionally they would glance at the two women, but not for long. Finally one of the women ejaculated 'Thank God!' and both weeping stared one at the other. It was too much for me. I went inside and wept, too. I felt there was real grief or joy there, too sacred for my curious gaze, and it was a time 'to weep with those who weep.' But my curiosity would not allow me to weep long until I found out why I was shedding tears. I approached them and asked the cause of this joy or grief, whichever it was, that so overcame them. Then one of them told me their story:

"They were sisters. They had married in Khartum and lived near each other in the days of General Gordon. Then came the Mahdi, and Khartum fell, and their husbands were killed or lost to them. They had been separated and made slaves of other men. Each had supposed the other dead long before. By accident they had met that day.

"'Have you children?' I asked.

"'Ah! we had, but they are gone, too,' was the reply.

"'Gone where?'

"'Oh, master, God only knows where!'

"How many such experiences there must have been during those days of the Mahdi's reign of terror and that of his successor; how many experiences similar save that but few survived the famine, pestilence, and hardships to meet again those from whom they had been heartlessly separated."

This and many other like incidents helped my imagination wonderfully as I walked through the ruined capital and repeopled it again, and beheld the devilish drama of the Mahdi's reign of lust. It drew me also to the black people with an affection and sympathy that has increased as I have come to know them better and to work among them and for them.

No other place on earth, perhaps, has witnessed more hellish savagery than this city of the Dervish despot. It was built of the most perishable material, and it is well. A few more seasons of rain and wind and much of it will not be traceable. Like the Mahdi and his cause, let it perish forever from the face of the earth. Even the history of these events can be helpful only to teach us what the world would be without the influence of the Christ life; other than that, it is a page of history better blotted out forever.

On the other side of the river, the beautiful new capital—Khartum—with well planned streets, clean and neat new houses, shaded avenues and gardens; offices, banks and markets; with new life and aims and ambitions, stands in beautiful contrast to this old capital, "full of the habitations of horrid cruelty" and dead men's bones.

V

THE SUDAN CAPITAL—KHARTUM

Halfaiyah (Khartum, North) is the terminus of the Sudan Military Railway, and about five hundred and eighty miles distant from Wadi Halfa. It is not a town, but a railway station and a boat landing—simply a place. However, there is plenty of room for a city, as large as Chicago, if you please, and as the Sudan trade with the outside world increases, as it must (all good things for the Sudan are in the future tense), there will gradually grow around that station a town of importance.

Just opposite Halfaiyah, on the south bank of the Blue Nile, is Khartum, the capital of the Sudan. Khartum has a sorrowful past, a promising present and a bright future—its glory is yet to be.

Situated on the left bank of the Blue Nile among palms and gardens of lime trees, the prospect is pleasing to the weary traveler alighting from the long desert journey. However, it must be confessed that in 1899, from the opposite bank of the river, the prospect was more pleasing than the reality.

The work of reconstruction had just begun. A plan for the city, the future capital, had been mapped out, and the enthusiastic chief of the Department of Public Works,—the municipal director,—thought he could see a city of real magnificence, where the ordinary mortal could see only heaps of dust and sun-dried brick. The plans provided most liberally for pleasant avenues and wide shady streets, but it required a great stretch of imagination to trace these anywhere except on the map.

The work of destruction was going on. It was the completion of the ruin begun by the Mahdi in 1885. Evidently the new order of things would have no place for the mud walls of the old capital except as they could be converted into new material. Everything had to become new, and squads of men,—soldiers, prisoners of war and convicts,—were busy removing the dust of ruined dwellings and converting all into new material for the construction of modern dwellings, offices or shops.

It is wonderful what has sprung up from that ruin heap during the past three years. The old rubbish has been removed or passed through the fire and has come out red square brick; the plan of the city has become recognizable in the magnificent avenues; streets have been graded and macadamized; houses have been built, markets con-

structed, banks and offices for business established, and the permanent population has increased many fold.

Old Khartum, which was a city of a half-civilized people only, has been converted into a new city built of quite different material and possessing altogether new forms, and this new Khartum has been prepared for a civilized population. The conception and energizing force came from the West. An ambition has been roused which will never die until the reconstruction of the whole country and the regeneration of the entire population of the Sudan is accomplished. A new life has come into this ancient people who were almost dead. Already Christianity has done more in two or three years, even out of the ruin which had been wrought, than centuries of Islam.

When we think of the thousands who died or were slain, the price of this political change seems too great; but if the blood of the slain is for the redemption of the millions, it takes on a new value. In the midst of the peace and prosperity of the new order of things, even Gordon's death has a new meaning. Here alone, unaided by any other human life or sustained by any human sympathy, the Christian soldier did his duty unto death. It was a life and death of magnificent power. I believe I will hardly be contradicted by any, when I

say that this was the power that drew that army for years across that great desert at a terrible cost of human suffering and life. There may have been other forces at work, but all together would have failed without the drawing power of this consecrated life and this unselfish death, moving upon the hearts of his fellow countrymen.

Egypt deserves her share of credit and glory; but Egypt without England would have been helpless—helpless because there was no patriotism, no national self-respect to sustain her and no material gain to move her. Without England, Egypt would have given up the struggle long before any successful issue was reached. Neither would the desire for gain have animated England in this long weary struggle with the desert. Gain, I believe, will eventually come to England; but the vindication of her national respect, because of Gordon's death, that was the highest motive and the real power which, as a magnet, drew England unwillingly on to final triumph in the Sudan.

In view of this, then, Gordon's death has a new and precious meaning, "Blood goes by quality" rather than "quantity," and the blood of Gordon has done more, perhaps, than that of all others in making restitution to the poor people of the Sudan.

Something of this must have been in the mind

of Lord Kitchener, when, almost first of all, he sought for some fitting monument for the Christian martyr and found it in the Gordon Memorial College at Khartum.

I think Gordon, too, must have felt something of this when he willingly laid down his life, though he might have saved it, and it adds a sacredness to the place where his life was poured out, and it puts a halo of glory about his death, as alone he trod the death vale, very closely in the Master's steps, and we can almost hear him say in the Master's own words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

"Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

VI

A MISSIONARY COMMISSION

It was toward the close of 1889 that my first visit to the Sudan was made. The journey was made in company with the Rev. Andrew Watson, D. D., of the American Mission in Egypt, and the Rev. A. A. Cooper, of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Our stay in the Sudan at that time was a brief one, for we had been sent there merely on a mission of inspection. The American United Presbyterian Mission, operating in Egypt, had commissioned Dr. Watson and myself to report on the prospect for mission work in the Sudan.

After the battle of Omdurman, which virtually put an end to the Mahdi rule, pioneer tradesmen and speculators, who are often very useful in the development of a country, but as often are most harmful and troublesome, made a rush toward the Sudan. The people who turn toward an unsettled country, such as the Sudan was at that time and still is, to find there a legitimate living from trade and industry, must necessarily have among them a large element of the adventurous and vicious.

To avoid undue haste and consequent unpleas-

ant results, the Government placed certain restrictions upon all classes entering the country. It was evident to everyone that the country needed tradesmen and mechanics, but to some, at least, the necessity for missionaries was not so clearly in evidence. It is a strange prejudice that has obtained among a certain class against the missionary, and with such, almost any other element is to be preferred. This feeling is not directed so much against the missionary, as against the cause he represents.

On our first entrance into the Sudan in 1889, in the wake of the Greek and Jew, who were seeking gain, one met with very few who did not look upon missionary enterprise with disfavor and as entirely unnecessary,—as both foolish and harmful; an intrusion, some insisted, that would be a source of great danger. Some, very intelligent and, in other matters, very wise men, even Christians, could see no necessity for it. "The religion the people already have," it was said, "is good enough for them; it is all they need, and all they can comprehend." It was also maintained that "Islam was a stepping-stone to Christianity," and might some time lead them up into the broader life and light of the latter.

Yet, in contrast with these, we met with many from among the military and Government officials,

who were entirely in sympathy with the missionary's work and realized what an influence for good and what a help the missionaries could be in removing from the minds of the people prejudice against the Government, a prejudice that was well known to exist.

Personally we have always been treated with consideration by the officials, and in this have no cause for complaint. On the contrary, we have much for which we are grateful in their kindly treatment of us. And if this should ever come to the notice of these, I trust they will accept it as an acknowledgment of our appreciation of their regard and of the many favors shown us. As difficult and trying as our circumstances sometimes were, they would have been infinitely more so without the help and sympathy of the official, the soldier, and the clerk, who had it in their power to favor and aid us at times.

The American Mission is widely known in Egypt, and, therefore, we carried with us on our entrance into the Sudan a prestige that was of immense help. At almost every railway station, or on the train or steamboat, at the telegraph or post office window, and in the government office and store, we would meet someone who knew us, either personally or as American missionaries, and who were, therefore, ready and eager to help us.

I wish those (and they are not a few) who do not fully appreciate the value and influence of the educational work of missions could make this tedious and tiresome journey in company with a missionary. I know of no better means of convincing the doubter of the value of mission schools. The personal help and favors one receives on such a journey add much to the pleasure of the trip, but, far more than this, they witness to a removal of prejudice to Christianity and a genuine appreciation of the influences exerted and the training imparted by the mission schools in the lives of these young men. Then, too, what of the influence which these young men exert all along the valley from the Mediterranean to the Equator? What of the influence of their more intelligent and more moral life?

Even though some of them are very weak and the inner light has almost gone out (small wonder sometimes!), yet it is always easier to deal with the people and to begin mission work among them in places where these young men are found, than elsewhere,—evidence of the influence for good which emanates from their lives.

This leads to another remark concerning these young men. We are often severe and unjust in our judgment of these lives, as perhaps of all Christians who have recently been brought out of

the darkness of their ignorance and superstition into the light of the Gospel. We set up too high a standard in judging them; one that even we, with all our superior advantages, fail to reach. For myself, I know that my life and experience with these young men and others similarly situated has taught me to use a more tender charity. It has led me to a better appreciation of their worth, and I appreciate more fully the power of the Gospel not only to sustain a man's spiritual life, but to use even those who have had but slight advantage, —*little* light, *partial* instruction only,—for shedding light under circumstances of the greatest difficulty and in the midst of the grossest darkness.

Returning from our first visit to the Sudan, a mere missionary reconnaissance, we recommended to the Missionary Association that work be undertaken in Northern Sudan, including the Blue Nile region. This was thought especially desirable in order that the native Evangelical Church of Egypt might become interested and be induced to send workers at her own expense. It was hoped that the reflex influence would put new life into the Church in Egypt, enable her to get a new view of the Gospel, and realize more fully her own missionary obligations. Then, too, our missionaries in Egypt, all speaking the Arabic language,—

which is the language of Northern Sudan,—would be ready to enter at once upon the work along with young educated Egyptians. The Mission in Egypt approved this report, but did not heartily recommend to the Board and Church in America to begin work at that time, because neither the available funds nor men seemed to warrant this advance movement. For some reason, perhaps because of general financial conditions at home, the Church had not been promising to her Missions in Egypt and India the support that was needed. The missionaries were hampered, aggressive work could not be undertaken in these old fields, and it was, therefore, thought unwise to undertake anything additional until the interest at home and the financial support were greatly increased and additional workers were sent forth.

But to the credit of the Church in America, it must be recorded that she did not take the same discouraging view of the matter. What the influences were which were brought to bear on the General Assembly of 1900 I do not know, but the Mission in Egypt was directed to send missionaries to the Sudan. Accordingly the Association in July of the same year, complying with the directions of the Board of Foreign Missions, appointed two missionaries, viz., H. T. McLaughlin, M. D., and the writer.

This appointment involved a trying "going-out" from home and old associations. Three times before had I passed through a similar experience,—in 1881, when I left my native land for work in Egypt; in 1888, when I was appointed to certain work in the villages of Upper Egypt; in 1892, when I was appointed to work in Tanta. Now again in 1900 I was under a new appointment, and this time to the Sudan. This was, perhaps, the severest trial of all. On former occasions youth and hope and ignorance of all that was before me softened the trial of those former partings. But now nineteen years of my best strength and manhood had been given to Egypt, and the ties thus formed with the missionaries and native pastors and teachers were to be severed. It was not a light thing to leave the work and associations of these years and begin a work entirely new and unknown.

In entering upon such an untried field, a sense of responsibility to one's constituency and to the Christian world at large is an added weight. Success means so much at the beginning of things, and failure would be held in evidence against the cause by those not already looking upon it with favor. The conditions were peculiar, and the foundations laid would need to be deep and broad. Any act of indiscretion on our part, either in

dealing with the people or the "powers that be," might affect very seriously, for years to come, the cause we wished to establish in the Sudan. However, we had the belief that one cannot utterly fail while in the line of duty. At the same time, the experience of several years of work in Egypt, an experience that had been varied in kind, came to our relief. There were, also, the helpful fellowships which belonged to those years spent in missionary service with others. One is never quite lonely if he is positively assured of the sympathy of others, though they be separated by miles of desert. This, too, was an incentive to better and more careful work.

Just as we were about to leave for Omdurman, an unlooked-for hindrance appeared. "The powers that be" had to be consulted and our proposition to begin work in Northern Sudan, with Omdurman or Khartum as a center from which to work, was met with a positive refusal. We were informed that no Christian mission work would be allowed among the Moslem population in the Sudan. At the same time it was pointed out to us that we might go beyond, to the black tribes of the White Nile, with liberty to open as many stations as we wished and with freedom to teach the people the Gospel as we pleased.

This was quite a disappointment and we were

not prepared to meet it. We were perplexed as to our duty. After consulting some of our brethren and the President of the Board, then in Cairo, it was determined to go on to Omdurman and be guided by our own judgment as to how we should proceed from that point.

We reached Omdurman on December 10, 1900, and began to busy ourselves, first of all, about a place in which to live and hold meetings for the young men and others, who were already in the Sudan, as interpreters and clerks in Government service and as tradesmen. There were more than seventy-five of these who were members or adherents of the evangelical churches of Egypt and Syria. Mr. Gebera Hanna, a licensed minister from the Presbytery of the Delta of Egypt, accompanied us and took charge of these meetings, and has since continued to hold meetings in Omdurman, Khartum and Halfaiyah, with very marked success.

Dr. McLaughlin and I thought it wise to try to visit the districts of the White Nile, and find out what would be the prospect for mission work among the black tribes, so as to give an intelligent report to our Association, and through it to our Church in America, allowing the General Assembly to determine our future course in the Sudan.

After taking this trip, we returned to Egypt and presented a report of our exploration.

At its next meeting the General Assembly directed the Mission in Egypt to appoint missionaries to begin work at the point we had selected on the Sobat River, about five hundred and sixty miles south of Khartum, among a tribe of blacks called Shullas.[1]

Dr. McLaughlin and the writer were again chosen to undertake this work. But, again, as we were ready to leave Egypt in July, 1901, our former privilege, granted by the Government to begin work in that district, was withdrawn and we were informed that we could begin work elsewhere among any of the "non-Moslem population of the Sudan, but one hundred and fifty miles distant in any direction from the mouth of the Sobat River." The reason given was that, in the meantime, the Austrian Catholic Mission had occupied a position on the White Nile about sixty miles to the north of our selected position.

This came to us as a very great surprise and seemed very unjust. We felt we could not submit to this judgment without at least making a protest, which we did. But to come to an under-

1 The term Shulla is often and commonly rendered Shilluk under the influence of an Arabic termination. The natives themselves, however, refer to themselves as Shullas.

standing with the Sudan authorities on this question required time. In the meantime, we were directed by the Association to go to Omdurman, remain there pending a settlement of this question, and then to do what seemed best after knowing the final judgment of the Government.

Accordingly, Dr. and Mrs. McLaughlin, Mrs. Giffen and I left Egypt, September 5, 1901, and arrived in Omdurman September 20, and thus I made my third entrance into the Sudan. We remained at Omdurman until arrangements had been made with the Government, and we were allowed to proceed to the Sobat in the enjoyment of all the privileges of the permission formerly given to us.

During our stay in the Dervish capital we found a wide field in which to occupy our time profitably, in helping Mr. Gebera Hanna in his meetings, in house visiting, and in caring for the sick. We came to believe that at Omdurman, Khartum, and the surrounding district there was a wide field for missionary work. Dr. and Mrs. Hall, of the Church Missionary Society, had already gained the confidence and affection of the people. Nothing so quickly removes the prejudice which so often hinders effective missionary work as a kind, consistent, Christian life. Mr. Gwynne, also a missionary of the Church Missionary Society, who

had been in Omdurman and Khartum since 1899, had been able to do very much toward the removal of that strange prejudice to which we have made reference in a former chapter. Mr. Gebera Hanna's work, with his earnest, simple Gospel teaching, was producing good results. All these influences were having a marked effect on the attitude of everyone toward the missionary cause.

At the time of which I write a large population was still in Omdurman, but that winter the Government offices were removed to the new buildings at Khartum, and since then there has been a steady flow of people toward the new center. A census of Omdurman was taken that winter (1900-1901), and it was found that there were still fifty thousand people in the old Dervish capital. Most of them clung to the old tumble-down place in the desert and were very loth to leave it for the new city. To many of the people it had its advantages. Property was cheap, living expenses less than in Khartum, and, above all else, the restrictions imposed by the municipality at Khartum were dreaded. The people loved their savage liberty. Poverty, too, prevented many, as they could not buy property in Khartum nor pay the expected rents. No doubt Omdurman will continue for some years to be a center for a large population unless compelled to leave by a Government order.

Our stay in Omdurman came to an end March 4, 1902, when we set out in two sailboats for the southland, but the difficulties overcome before this start was possible appeared at times almost unsurmountable.

VII

THE START

While we waited at Omdurman for the Government's permission to enter on mission work on the Sobat, the best season for work in that district passed. The rainy season was now less than three months distant. The winds which, during the winter months, are from the north, now changed to the south. The weather was hot. It would require nearly a month to get ready, and who knew how long for the journey? When we would arrive at the Sobat there would be no houses to shelter us, and who could calculate how long it would require to build even the rudest shelter? We had our tents, but they were small, with single ply of canvas, and what protection would these afford from tropical heat and rain storms? How would the people receive us? Would they help us prepare for the rains? Would they work for us? We had been warned that the people were utterly lacking in ambition, and would give us no assistance whatever.

There was no end to problems demanding a solution, but who could solve them? Should we go or should we delay until after the next rainy season?

One month to get ready, one month for travel, and one month to build our houses. This would be sufficient if everything went without a hitch. But there was that "if."

Other questions came in for consideration. How should we travel, and what should we take with us? Should we go by sailboat or by government transport steamer? The latter would take us more quickly and with more certainty as to time. But it was much more expensive, and we wished to take so much baggage, provision and material that the expense would be appalling. The sailboat would be less expensive, but less comfortable, and would afford less certainty as to the time of our arrival. All of these problems had to be considered and a decision arrived at in every case. There was no one of experience or whose judgment could be trusted whom we could take into our council. Indeed, the most of our friends were miserable comforters. Some said we were foolish to think of it. It was a terrible country, the people were beastly savages and not worth trying to save. The fever would overcome us before we would get there. The mosquitoes would sting us to death; "they were not little mosquitoes," said one, "as we have in Egypt, but they are like that!" and he held up his hand, meaning between thumb and finger, about an inch. Another tried to discourage us by telling

us that the dust up there was something indescribable, "And it is not nice clean dust, such as we have here, but a dirty black dust, just like the people." Snakes were crawling everywhere, they said, and wild beasts were roaming all over the country. The river was full of crocodiles that might snatch us from the boat, and the air was full of vultures, big enough and vicious enough to tear us to pieces. To listen to such talk, there were certainly "lions in the way."

But we were inclined to go. The delay had become discouraging to those at home, who were expecting us to do something more than "report progress," and who could not be expected to fully understand the situation.

There were dangers certainly; greater dangers, perhaps, than at some other seasons, but these had, no doubt, been magnified. On the other hand, we dared not act rashly, for our one great fear was *failure;* a failure that, perhaps, might prove fatal to the undertaking. If some calamity *should* overtake us, it would discourage others. After-events might prove that we had been foolish, or they might be interpreted to mean that the maintenance of a mission on the Sobat by white missionaries was not even a possible thing. So much depended upon the first year or two. At last we decided to go.

As to the method of travel, the open sailboat was determined upon as being less expensive. It is no easy matter to arrange an agreement with the owners of boats. Few boats ply on the White Nile. Some would not undertake the trip at any price. *All* asked exorbitant sums, and it required much of our precious time to arrange terms.

At last, everything was settled and a day fixed for our departure. Two boats were hired, and these were to be overhauled, cleaned and put in best of shape for travel. The boats used on the Upper Nile are not so well built as those of Egypt, nor are they so well manned. They are much broader, however, and not so easily capsized. We were often very grateful for their breadth, as we saw the careless handling of the immense expanse of sail. One night I awoke and found all the men asleep, even the helmsman flat on his back with both feet against the rudder, while the boat scudded before the wind.

In the middle of the boat we had arranged what was to be our home for, we did not know how long. A pole was run along the center of the boat, just back of the mainmast, at about six feet above the deck. Over this we fixed cross poles, and over the poles mats, which came down to the edge of the boat at deck level. This gave us a covered space nearly twelve feet square, where we were pro-

tected in a measure from the sun and had more or less privacy—*generally less.* The sailors, who wore only a loin cloth, did not seem to feel any embarrassment, and had but very little respect for the privacy of our apartment.

Our outfit consisted of two of these boats and a *felucca,* or small rowboat. The McLaughlins occupied one boat and we the other. On the McLaughlin boat was the crew, a lot of provision and baggage, with the servant boy, Abbas, and Dr. and Mrs. McLaughlin. On the Giffen boat we had a similar crew and cargo, and about two thousand brick for ballast.

A boat's crew was seven men and the captain, and, in addition to the sailors, a slave woman who grinds, bakes and cooks for them. In this part of the world no boat's crew is complete without such a woman. Then the captain had a woman with him, ostensibly his wife, or one of his wives. There was also a boy, ten or twelve years old, said to be the captain's son. Also a man called Mohammed, whom, I think, I had best introduce here, as he later entered much into our affairs.

Mohammed's father was an Arab and a clerk in the Government service at Khartum before the Mahdi's time. Mohammed was born at Khartum and his mother was a Shulla, of the tribe to which we were going. When Khartum fell into the hands

of the Mahdi Mohammed's father was killed. His mother then fled with him, a boy of about twelve years of age, and succeeded in getting away to her people on the Sobat River.

When Dr. McLaughlin and I made our first trip of exploration on the Sobat, a year before this time, we were met by Mohammed at his village, Mai-nam, where we remained one night. He was then in appearance very much like the rest of the people, except in the color of his skin. We were struck with his appearance, however, and especially by the fact that he spoke Arabic very well. Indeed, we were drawn to him. Soon after our return to Khartum we met Mohammed, who had come down on business. His father had owned some property in Khartum, and Mohammed's business just now was to look after his interests in this property. His business matters arranged, he wished to return to his people, and asked for a place on our boat, and was taken on, in the hope that he might be of use to us.

We had another man with us, an ex-soldier. He was a brickmaker by trade, a Moslem by profession, and a Shulla by birth. Our intention was to use him to help us to build our houses, but he turned out to be a bad character,—killed a policeman and threatened the life of the Governor. He was court-martialed, and, having been found

guilty, was returned to Khartum for execution. Some leniency was shown him and the sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. He afterward committed suicide. He was a complete failure so far as we were concerned, for he did no work for us. His family, a wife and three children, were also with us as passengers on the boat. In all, we numbered nineteen souls, and, besides, we had Jok, the dog, who in himself was quite a character and an important member of the party.

We left our house in Omdurman at about 11 A. M., on March 4, 1902. This is a date to be remembered in the history of the Sudan Mission, and is of special interest to those of us who turned our faces to the south that day.

The boats were anchored at the South Gate landing, and a mile and a half from our house. According to agreement, our captains should have had everything ready to start immediately on our arrival at the landing. But, alas! an agreement is one thing and the performance of it quite another. Things were in a tumble on the boats, and confusion reigned supreme. The sailors were holding off for "bakshish" and they were encouraged in their strike by the two captains. There was scolding in all quarters. The cargo of bricks, lime, lumber, provisions and baggage was crowded around everywhere without any attempt at order.

Every place was full both above and below deck, fore and aft, even the private apartments.

But all such snarls untangle if one only waits, and we waited. The swearing ceased; everybody looked sullen. Then a second agreement was arrived at and we were to leave at four o'clock; but when four o'clock came there was no sign of captains nor of sailors. We simply waited. The captains did not put in an appearance until the next morning, and it was eleven o'clock when we set sail.

The *start* was made.

VIII

THE JOURNEY

The wind was favorable that first day, and sailing was a delight. There was no rocking or motion. Two or three weeks of that sort of boat-life grows monotonous, but for that one day we enjoyed the laziness of it. We were all so tired that we could not even think of difficulties ahead. It was enough to be at rest and at peace.

Leaving Khartum for the South, the river banks are low and flat and generally fringed with green. No hills or mountains appear anywhere, except far back from the river, isolated peaks, and all trace of these is soon lost in great level plains. Flocks of sheep and goats and herds of cattle appear all along the river, and especially where the grass is most abundant. There are many islands scattered along the river, which at low Nile are beautifully green and often cultivated, but during high Nile these are all inundated, as are also the low grassy banks.

As we proceed up the great river the change of scenery is very gradual, but there is a change. More trees come into view. The flocks and herds

continue to be almost everywhere in evidence, but there is less of the cultivated land, and the islands are covered with tall grass.

The population becomes more sparse, the game more plentiful, and great flocks of birds line the banks. The crocodiles and the hippopotami are a constant source of diversion. You begin to realize that there is a gradual change coming over the whole prospect and that you are a long way from home. Long lines of naked, black savages appear on the banks. Standing on one foot, the other resting on the knee with leg akimbo, and leaning the whole body on a spear, they curiously gaze for an hour or more while our boat slowly and silently pushes by. We return a curious gaze and meditate and wonder.

Even at night the heavens are not the same as you have always known them to be, and the stars make you feel you are among strangers and give you a lonesome feeling. Generally when one is homesick, the sky at night appears like the face of a friend; here it is the face of a stranger. The "Dipper" and the North Star are away down on the horizon; even the "Milky Way" has wandered from its natural place, and a lot of new denizens of the sky whom you never saw before have moved into the south side. The grunting and coughing of the hippopotami, just alongside your boat,

does not conduce to sleep, but it helps you to realize that it is not all a dream.

The hippopotamus is an ugly brute at best, although not dangerous, and always in evidence along the White Nile, day or night. What is most generally seen is an immense yawning mouth, although frequently the whole body appears above water or on some small island. Their huge tracks may be seen everywhere in the soft mud along the banks.

One evening as we were sailing under a very light wind, one of these monsters collided with our boat. As far as the hippo was concerned, it was a head-on collision. I think it was a mistake all around. He had probably been cooling himself after the heat of the day and was drowsing under the water when our boat gently, and without noise, came upon him. He awoke suddenly not knowing the boat was there, and notwithstanding the heavy cargo of brick and lime, he lifted one side of the boat with a jerk; then with a roar dived again to reappear a hundred yards away, snorting and spouting water at a great rate. Someone has raised the question as to whether a hippopotamus ever has the headache; and whether the whole of his head aches at one time? If so, what a headache this fellow must have had that night.

Other game we saw on that journey, but at a

distance. There were many of the pretty gazelle. They were not at all wild, but seemed to think they had a right to be there. One felt sorry to think of their being hunted and shot down. Lions we heard once only, but did not see them, and at one place where we anchored for the night the captain forbade the men to go ashore, because, "there were leopards there."

The crew proved to be rather a decent lot of merry men, or boys rather, and were not hard to manage. The cook, homely as she was, was evidently something of a wit, judging from the roars of laughter that came from the men when she set about to entertain them. She must have been something of a philosopher too, or she could not have had much spirit left to joke. It seemed to me she did as much work as all the rest of the crew. The place she worked in was low and hot, and even upon our deck in the open air the smoke at times almost stifled us; what was it then where she stayed? When she was not cooking or baking, it was grind, grind, grind. We often mused over the music of her grindstones. Sometimes it was like the sound made in milking rapidly with both hands into a tin pail, and you almost expected to hear the milk maid say: "So, so, Bossy!" Then again it was the sound of a carpenter's saw or plane.

The stones used for grinding are like those used

SOME TALL SHULLA SPECIMENS

I Won't Have My Picture Taken

ARABS AT FIRST WOODING STATION

From Khartum, White Nile

in Khartum, and Omdurman, and Northern Sudan, where they have stone. The lower stone is about eighteen inches long and a foot wide, and has a flat surface. It is placed on the ground at an incline of about twenty-five degrees. The upper stone is small and oval generally, but may be any shape. It, too, has a flat surface. The woman takes the small stone in her hand and kneeling on the ground rubs the grain to a powder on the large one with much the same motion as that made in washing on a washboard. All the time she sings a cheerful, but rather monotonous song, often jerked out by the motion of her body, while the perspiration and hair oil flow and drop down,—I will not say where. We never had the courage to taste their bread, which was baked over the fire on a large flat earthen plate and looked like a huge, purple griddle-cake. But these were wonderful cakes to the men, and great stacks of them would disappear, at least twice every day, with no other relish than the cook's wit, which was always ready and abundant, and responded to with peals of merry laughter.

Their only vessel is the gourd, and like the petroleum tin can in Egypt, it serves many useful purposes. Of all sizes but of only one shape,—a round gourd cut in two equal parts, and each half making a vessel. In this they brew their *marisa*

(a kind of light beer or fermented drink). This, too, serves as a measure, as drinking cup, as wash basin, as soup dish, as spoon, as milk pail, for every purpose for which you can use any vessel, be it made of precious metal or common earth; and, besides, it does for a covering for the head, as a protection from the sun.

But speaking of protection from the sun, reminds me that care in this particular is not often observed. The theory that it is dangerous for man to expose his head to the sun does not seem to be well founded. These people not only wear no covering on their heads, but in many cases their heads are shaved, and they sit for hours in the midday sun without any apparent inconvenience. When in Omdurman we were told that among the blacks a new-born child is put out in the hot sun for a time each day, for the first three days of its life, and "after that the sun does not hurt it." We have never been able to prove this statement, but there must be something that makes these poor black heads feel the heat less than we do.

I have mentioned that our privacy was not much respected. They were in no wise embarrassed by the scantiness of their own clothing, and could see no reason why we should object to their watching us make our toilet in the morning. Their men wear only a loin cloth. Their cook wore only a

strip of cloth wrapped around her, covering her from the waist to a little below the knees. Byyan's wife wore a little more than this, but the little girls and the captain's wife wore only the girdle fringed with leather thongs.

All the women have their hair done up in hundreds of tight, little braids and oiled with fat, —tallow, I think it is,—until, when they sit in the sun, the grease runs down over their faces. One has much more charity for this hair-oiling custom after spending a time in this climate, especially in that of Omdurman; for in the dry heat one's hair becomes so dry it almost breaks off.

"These little braids" (I quote from Mrs. Giffen's diary) "into which they arrange their hair were a curiosity to me at first. No woman can comb her own hair. They have it done up about once a month, and it is more than an all day job. First, the ointment must be mixed. I do not know all the ingredients, but there are powdered cloves and cinnamon, oil of sandal wood, attar of roses, and some sort of fat or oil.

"Then the old ointment must be washed out, new rubbed on, new braids made,—which in this short woolly hair is no easy matter either for the operator or the one operated upon—strings are braided to the natural hair to seemingly increase its length, and then a rich plaster of ointment is

spread over the finished work of art. Even Egyptian women who have lived long in the Sudan follow this fashion in a modified form.

"The oiling of the body has an excuse in the dryness of the climate, and while they no doubt do use for this purpose, when they must, castor oil with its natural perfume, this is not their choice. Ordinarily the oil is highly scented, and not in the least unpleasant if it has not been worn too long. Even the babies are oiled. They wear never a stitch of clothing except a string of beads. The babies of the poor, whose mothers must work, are tied to their mothers' backs, and the little bare heads bob up and down in the hot sun, as the mothers carry their loads on their heads or shoulders, or go about their work, and often the babies go off to sleep."

These were some of our observations and meditations as we pried into the public privacy of our traveling companions, but we had other thoughts, at times.

Our contracts were, that no traveling should be done on the Sabbath. There seemed to be no objection to this clause when it was first approved of and signed by both parties. Later on, however, when the wind seemed to blow from the north on the Sabbath and from the south on Saturday and Monday, it seemed to the captain a great mistake

to tie up. But the Sabbaths were days of real rest to us. Our first Sabbath was at a quiet place near Goz Abu Guma, and Mr. Gebrail, a native Christian, from Egypt, spent the day with us, and I am sure it was a day of refreshing to him. That morning at devotions we sang, "Let the rivers in their gladness clap their hands," and Mrs. Giffen, noticing how much the ripple of the water flowing by sounded like the soft clapping of hands, called our attention to it. I suppose we will never again sing that psalm without the memory of that Sabbath at Goz Abu Guma.

Farther on, the population grew yet more sparse and the country was wild. In Mrs. Giffen's diary I find this note:

"Where we are anchored this morning there is not to be seen anywhere a boat or a hut; a flock or a herd; man or beast; except those on our own boats and some huge hippos. The wind is blowing from the south and the men are employing their time fishing. They have just now caught a catfish more than a yard long."

And yet we are told that this very section was once densely populated. On the right bank were Dinkas, and on the left bank Shullas; but because of the frequent raids of slave hunters and the Baggara Arabs, they "trekked" south, leaving the country almost without inhabitants. Of this

section Dr. Schweinfurth, writing about 1870, says:

"The Shulluk (Shulla) tribe inhabits the entire left bank of the White Nile, occupying a territory about 200 miles long and ten miles wide, and which extends right to the mouth of the Gazelle River. Hemmed in by the Baggara on the west, it is prevented by the river from extending itself farther eastward, and only the lower course of the Sobat has any of the Shulluks for its denizens. Their subjection to the Egyptian Government, which was completed in 1871, has caused a census to be taken of all the villages on the left bank of the Nile, which resulted in an estimate of about 3000 villages. Now the Shulluk land, which lies upon the White Nile, has an extent hardly less that 2000 square miles, and when the number of heads on this is compared with those in the populous districts of Europe, we are justified in reckoning from 600 to 625 to a square mile; a result altogether similar is arrived at from a reckoning based on the estimate of there being 3000 villages, each village having huts varying in number from 45 to 200, and each hut averaging four or five occupants; this would give a total of about 1,200,000.

"No known part of Africa, scarcely even the narrow valley of the Nile in Egypt, has a density of population so great; but a similar condition of

circumstances, so favorable to support a teeming population, is perhaps without a parallel in the world. Everything which contributes to exuberance of life here finds a concentrated field—agriculture, pasturage, fishing and the chase. Agriculture is rendered easy by the natural fertility of the soil, by the recurrence of the rainy seasons, by irrigation effected by the rising of the river, assisted by numerous canals, and by an atmosphere ordinarily so overclouded as to moderate the radiance of the sun and to retain throughout the year perpetual moisture."

Since Dr. Schweinfurth wrote the above, calamity has overtaken the Shullas. Even at that time the slave dealer had begun his nefarious traffic, and the power of the tribe had begun to wane; since then the savage reign of the Mahdi has completed the ruin, and the Shulla tribe does not exceed 500,000 people.

We had to come all the way from America to Central Africa to see a prairie fire. It started in the tall grass on the bank to which we were anchored, and as it came on toward us it cleaned up everything in its way. We were devoutly thankful that our house was not stationary. We moved out into midstream and watched the fire raging past us.

The flame and smoke was the signal for thou-

sands of birds to assemble for their prey; circling above awaiting their opportunity were great vultures, that came from no one knew where. Ten minutes before the fire began there were none to be seen. Ten minutes later the sky was full of them. There were great storks on the places already burned over, picking up their prey and filling their pouches. No doubt thousands of reptiles were destroyed, as also a large number of smaller birds that nest in the tall grass and bush. The people start these fires to clear the country of the tall grass, and to rid it of undesirable reptile life. It also improves their pasture and allows them open country for travel, and discovers any wild beasts of prey. All the way on both banks of the river, in the smoke by day and the flames by night, we could trace these fires.

While towing our boats,—the towpath was over one of these burnt spaces—the sailors came upon a nest of crocodile eggs, and then there was a perfect scramble, as they fairly fell over each other to secure the eggs. They said there would be one hundred and one, but after counting out one hundred *less* one they scratched in vain for the other two. It was supposed the old mother was not yet through laying, or else, rather, had quit too soon.

The towing of the boat was hard and often

almost cruel work. Of course we were anxious to reach our journey's end and did not restrain them from pressing forward. But the wind was contrary, or there was a dead calm, and there was no prospect of this state of things improving. Yet we had to push on. The method of propelling the boat under such circumstances was to attach a long rope to the mast and the men would all get out on the bank and pull the boat along. In many places, however, the tall grass was still standing and the blades were sharp as knives. Where the grass had been burned away the sharp stubble remained, and the men often returned to the boat cut and bleeding from head to foot. Another method was only a little less cruel. It was to shove the boat with long poles reaching down to the bottom of the river. Four men on each side and each man with a pole planted in the mud and fixed against the shoulder; they would walk the length of the boat and back again, for hours. This bruised and cut their breasts and shoulders until they bled. But there was no complaining and, little by little, with the help of an occasional breeze, the five hundred and sixty miles were covered in about twenty-two days.

As we drew near the Sobat River there was a little more nervous excitement, and we stood and watched the eastern shore. Taufikiyah is about

eight or ten miles below the junction of the Sobat with the White Nile. It is the military station of the district. We had a short stop here and then a favorable breeze carried us on and into the mouth of the Sobat.

There is much the same difference in the color of the two rivers that meet here, that is observed at the meeting of the Blue Nile with the White Nile at Khartum. And strange to say, the native people—the Shulla—call the Sobat River, *Tulfi* or *Blue Water*. Just where the Sobat enters the Nile it is flowing almost directly from east to west; while the Nile at this point flows from south of west. The two rivers thus coming together form a wide angle. The waters at the meeting are distinctly marked, not only by the difference in color, but also by a little ridge like two furrows thrown together, capped with white foam, and then for a considerable distance the cloudy, milky water, which indicates the mountain stream, can be distinguished, but is at last lost in the blacker, muddy water of the White Nile.

As we entered the mouth of the Sobat, and turned eastward, the breeze failed us and then began the struggle with the current that had to be overcome by towing. The excitement grew more intense as we drew nearer, and we strained our necks to catch a glimpse of the site of our new

home. Our boat had been taking the lead all morning, but just as we were nearing the landing place a sudden squall drove our boat across the river and above the landing, and by the time we got it back again the McLaughlins were there.

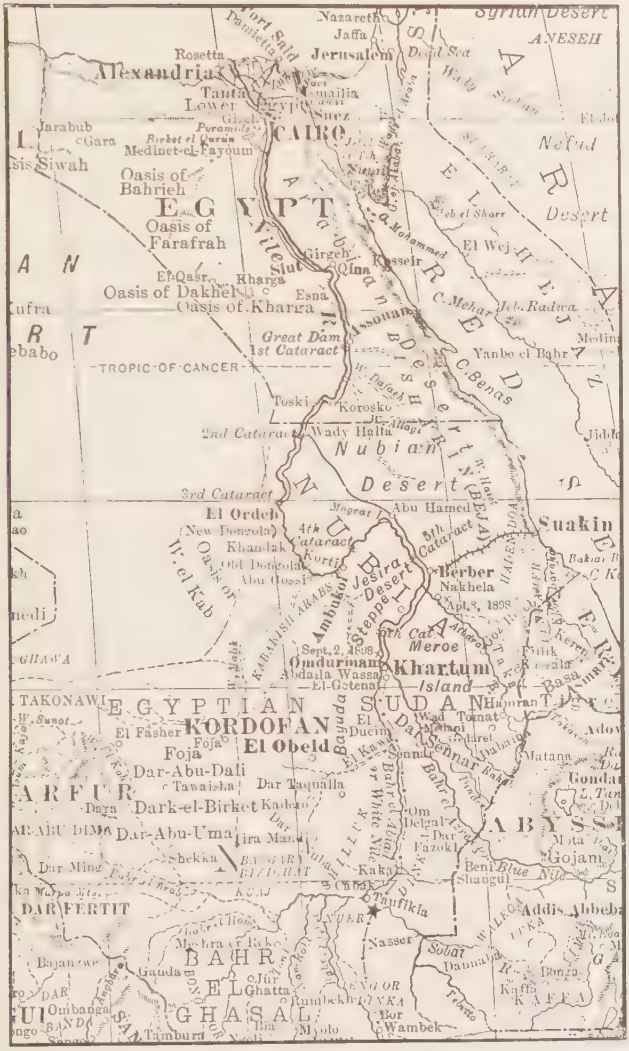
The journey was ended.

IX

FIRST EXPERIENCES AT DOLEIB HILL

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon of March 27th when we got ashore at Doleib Hill. Our sails had announced the coming of boats, and a great crowd had assembled to meet us. They were all, or nearly all, men, and each man was armed with one or more spears and clubs. This was no unusual display of arms, for always, everywhere, the black man goes thus armed. Of course, these weapons are not very effective against any considerable number of guns, but they would have easily been sufficient to overcome our small force; and we thought of that as we stepped ashore among them, and tried to salute the crowd with a confident, cheerful smile. We never could know whether they were pleased or displeased; there was rather a sullen quietness.

There was scarcely a man of them that had made any attempt to cover his nakedness. They were truly a savage people, and as primitive in their habits as can perhaps be found anywhere in the world. Fortunately they are not vicious, and are rather kindly disposed. But the first sight



THE NILE FROM THE DELTA TO ITS TRIBUTARY THE SOBAT

Doleib Hill is situated upon the north bank of the Sobat River at the point indicated by the black star. The spelling of proper names on this map is in some instances at variance with the spelling (based upon the very latest authorities) adopted throughout the book.

of a throng of savages suddenly presenting themselves in their nakedness, and that, too, just as you have come from an extreme civilization, leaves an impression that will never be removed, no matter how familiar with them you may afterward become.

The ladies were perhaps the chief attraction to the crowd. Many of them had never seen a white woman before. Our whole outfit must have been of extreme interest, judging from the outbursts of astonishment that came from the crowd as each new article of furniture or baggage was carried from the boat.

They showed no inclination to make themselves useful in helping us unload our stuff from the boats; but, by the help of the sailors, it was all carried off before the sun went down, except the brick, the lime, and the lumber.

The weeds and tall grass had been burned away from the level ground in front of the hill or knoll, and a little higher up under the palms we cleared away a space, where we placed our goods, set up the stove, cooked our supper, and arranged our beds for the night.

As the shadows of night crept on, our naked neighbors slipped away to their villages, and left us alone. There was perhaps a feeling of loneliness as the stars came out and the stillness of the

night could almost be felt. It was a fifteen or twenty minute walk to the nearest villages, and away east and west were long stretches of prairie land. We were alone, but not alone, for after our evening devotions we felt a Presence that took away all feeling of loneliness. We went to sleep that night with an assurance that He who "never slumbers and never sleeps" would be our Keeper, and we slept with as great security as if we had been in the heart of a great city, and awoke in the morning refreshed as only those do who sleep in the open air.

Early the next morning, visitors began to pour in from the villages, and among them some women, but no children. We busied ourselves making our camp, and protecting our goods from the ravages of white ants, but generally displaying ourselves to the interested and interesting crowd of spectators. We felt that we had no time to lose; that our attention must be given entirely to the building of some sort of shelter from the rains and storms that might be expected any day. Accordingly, on that very first day, we entered into an agreement with some ex-soldiers, who are known as "civilians" in all that region of country, to bring us poles from the woods. It was our intention to build houses similar to those of the native people, but somewhat modified to suit our needs.

The native house is a circle of wall built of mud, about one foot thick and six feet high, and thatched with a cone-shaped roof. The finished product has very much the appearance of a well built haystack. There are no windows and the place of entrance is a small hole about two and one half feet high and two feet wide, and is in the shape of a horse collar. We thought to improve on this architecture somewhat, by building our rooms square, with doors in the gables high enough to walk through, and windows to admit air and light. The idea of so many great openings very much amused the people. They said "The mosquitoes will sting you to death. There are not many now, but after a while when the rain comes and there is grass all over that plain, and the corn is so high, they come in swarms, and will eat your eyes out."

We were ready to believe them, but still did not change our plan of architecture.

"And now will you help us build?" was our inquiry, and the only response was "Booh! ah-h-h"![1] The men we sent out (civilians) were not very successful in securing poles. They came back that first day with one pole for each man. That would not have been so bad had the poles not been worthless. There were eight men, and there were

[1] An exclamation of surprise or refusal.

eight poles, no two of the same length, and so crooked as to be worthless for building, and too green and full of sap to be of use for fuel.

The second day, with most careful instructions, their work was but little better. This was not very encouraging, certainly. The day following that was a Sabbath, and with our tents in shape, our camp arranged, and fuel prepared, we were grateful and happy in the prospect of a day of rest.

But, alas! It was not exactly a rest, although we did cease from labor or even thinking about it. Early in the morning, even before we were up and dressed, the people were around us in scores, peeping into our tents, examining our goods and provisions, and inspecting us personally. All day long they thronged our camp, a jolly lot, talking and laughing, coming, going, and remaining, until the sun went down. Of course, we were interested and amused too, but we did *not* rest. We felt as if we had been to a circus all day; or rather, that *we had been the circus.* I think we felt very much as the animals must feel, or the fat woman, or dwarf, or giant of a show. We had been looked at, and laughed at; but of course we looked and laughed too. No, it was not a *Sabbath*, but rather a day of hard work. We did have a service Sabbath morning, in one of the tents, but it was under peculiar

difficulties; even the service was amusing to the people.

Eventually the people learned that we had a rest day. A day sacred to our *Jo-uk*, but they could not yet enter into the spirit of it, nor understand its sacredness. They soon, however, came to respect it, and seldom thronged about us on that day, either to ask for work or to buy and sell. But this first day was a gala day for the people and better than a circus for all of us, in spite of the fact that we would once in a while pull ourselves up, as we would recollect that it was the Sabbath. But I must give a quotation here from Mrs. Giffen's diary:

"I wish you could see a group of them before our tent. They are young men, full grown, and all naked. They have my hand mirror and are as pleased with it as so many monkeys. They get into all positions and dance and jump, just to see how they look. The tent is open front and back, and they have discovered that sitting at one opening and looking in the mirror hanging on the tent wall, they can see their friends who are sitting at the opposite opening in the tent, and it affords no end of fun for them."

This was our first Sabbath on the Sobat, and when Monday came we felt very much indeed as if we had spent the previous day in dissipation.

As we were finishing our breakfast someone looked up and said, "Ibn el Mek has come," and, sure enough, there was Prince A-Ko-Kwin riding a mule, and accompanied by his suite.

The Prince is of the royal family, and claims the right to sit upon the throne of the Shulla people. His village is eight or ten miles to the east of Doleib Hill. He had come to pay us a visit. He was preceded by a man carrying the Prince's gun. This outrider (who was walking) wore a fez, a soldier's gray wool ulster, and boots without shoestrings. Then following after the mule were eight men, dressed in full Shulla outfit. The Prince alighted from his steed, and Dr. McLaughlin and I arose to pay our respects. We had met him at his own village a year previous to this, while we were exploring the country.

The Prince was clad in a silk robe, a turban and boots; but the robe had been made for a much shorter man than the Prince (who is six feet, six and one-half inches tall), so between the bottom of the robe and the top of his boots there was a strip of commons. The material of the robe was of Syrian silk; a light blue and white stripe, and the ladies thought it would be "just lovely for shirt-waists."

He was served with tea, drank it and groaned—for more—and licked the sugar from the bottom

of the cup. We then excused ourselves to have prayers, and while we were gone the Prince removed his robe, and for the remainder of the day made himself comfortable in his shirt-sleeves; and the sleeves were the most of the shirt, and the shirt was all of his dress.

As he had evidently come to spend the day, Dr. McLaughlin and I felt that we could not afford to take time to play with him. We therefore set about to clear away ground for our houses. The Shullas were very shy of helping us. On the top of the hill or ridge was where we wished to build. It is back from the river about one hundred and fifty feet, and the ridge was nearly a thousand feet long and twenty-five feet high.

On top of a little knoll we prepared to build. The "civilians" helped us some, but the blacks persistently refused. They were always present every day and all day, but declined any bribe we could offer them. I have no doubt they were often amused at our attempts to model after their methods. Sometimes they seemed to pity, but more often they laughed at us.

Mohammed remained with us and proved of great service in many ways. He knew the people, their language, and their ways, and could give us good advice, and teach us many things in the way of building mud walls. But for all that, the

walls were growing very slowly. It seems such a simple thing, and one would suppose a few days would be sufficient to build several good big houses. It is different when you try it.

One day Mohammed came with a man who said, "We will work for you if you will pay us for it." Of course we readily consented. He went away and we hardly expected to see him again; but he returned with about twenty men and as many women, the latter with their water jars. They began to work early in the morning before the sun was up. All were skilled workmen—skilled in mixing and placing mud—and we were happy for two or three hours; then they all disappeared. We thought there was a strike on. We did not know the cause, whether for shorter hours,—the hours, even of only sixty minutes each, were pretty long in that sun,—or whether it was for higher wages. We were ready to concede almost anything if they would but work. They came back, however, an hour or so before the sun went down and put on another layer of mud; and thus things continued day after day, and no amount of coaxing or bribing would induce them to do more.

But more men were employed, some to bring poles from the woods, and men and women to gather and bring in great bundles of corn-stalks for the lath, and bundles of the long, clean grass

for the thatch, until the place looked something like a wheat field after a storm. At this time our whole compound was a picture. The grass for the roof is brought in bundles, looking much like shocks of wheat, and these were in irregular piles all over the hillside. Then there were piles of rope made of grass; these were to be used in place of nails to hold the rafters, lath and shingles. Added to all this material was our own baggage, the tents, boxes, beds, tables, and cooking stove. We and our belongings had the appearance of having been dropped there by a cyclone and forgotten.

To add to the annoyance and confusion the workmen and workwomen insisted on receiving their pay every evening, and, in order to gain their confidence, we humored them in this as in other childish ways. And why should they trust us? How do they know we mean to pay them? Judging from their past experience with white men, they reason that we will not pay them if we can help it. Our aim was to gain and keep their confidence, and we must suffer any amount of annoyance to accomplish this.

We had taken with us beads, brass, iron, and cloth, to use in exchange. These were not quickly measured out in exact quantities. Every evening they were spread out in front of the tent. Then the roll was called, and each received a wage.

Sometimes we had as many as fifty or sixty men and women clamoring for wages. Mohammed kept a list of their names, and it caused great amusement among them to hear their names read out, and they had quite an air of importance when they would come up to select their pay. The difficulty was in the too great variety to select from; we worked almost as many hours paying the day's wages as they had spent in labor. The beads were measured out in the top of a catsup bottle, and the brass wire was measured off by the span. But the beads were of many kinds, sizes, and colors, and, for the ladies especially, it took a long time to make a choice. Mrs. Giffen has described one evening in the following note:

"I would not dare attempt to write any letter, except this, in the noise and confusion that is going on. The men and women are getting their pay for the work done. They are being paid in cloth, beads, etc., and my part of it is to cut off cloth when it is called for, and between times I can write a word, ''Tis Babel and Bedlam wed.' I thought I knew a noise when I heard it, but, as a matter of fact, I had never heard a noise until within the last month. It is almost always a good natured noise, however. So it is not so bad. But they just *will* all talk at once.

"Just as I finished that last sentence there was

a noise outside our tent that could be heard above the noise inside, and away went the crowd in a rush. It was a fight over a sheep, and spears clashed for a minute. But I really admire the women. They went right in among the spear-points and separated the men before Mohammed got to them. It was not a case of men waiting to be parted either (as I have so often seen in Egypt, where they stop and most excitedly look around and wait for somebody to hold them back), for these men are not made that way. In one sense, at least, this is not a land of down-trodden womanhood. Now the women are back again, calm and sweet, taking their pay and keeping it, too, and taking care of themselves as well."

Over and over again we had these noisy scenes at pay hour. As they gained more confidence in us, however, we lengthened the time, and paid them only once a week. This was an advance. Finally we sent down to Khartum and brought up such goods as they needed and placed them in a room built for them. These goods were sold to the people, and Mohammed was placed in charge. At the same time, we brought Egyptian coin, and began paying for everything in coin. Thus we instituted a new order of things, and it worked splendidly. They soon learned the value of the coin and preferred this method. It gave them, too,

a wholesome lesson in buying and selling. It was a bit of business training they very much needed, and it was an immense relief to us.

The house began to take on definite shape. The men were more successful in securing poles, although the specimens they brought left much to be desired. Men were found who could put on the thatch. That is a trade and, with blacksmithing, is about the only skilled work they have. A thatch on a Shulla house, when carefully done, has a very neat appearance. But the angles, and gables, and comb to the roof, perplexed them. Their skill did not extend to this kind. Still, with all their round and curved angles, their crooked rafters and black clay walls, they afforded us real shelter, and were houses of very pleasant memories in spite of some very unpleasant experiences during those first months. The trials, perhaps, sweetened the memories and the contrast heightened our appreciation.

It was the second of May when the first roof was completed and the first house made ready for occupancy. The second followed in a few days, and then came a rain storm, and Mrs. Giffen was taken seriously ill. The third house had to wait, but finally they were all under cover: A house for each family and a kitchen for the compound. We had windows, but no glass. Wire netting served

ONE OF THE FIRST HOUSES AT DOLEIB HILL

to screen us from the mosquitoes, or, at least, kept the goats from wandering in.

It was far from ideal in any respect. The roofs leaked, the white ants tunneled the walls: a kind of beetle bored the rafters until the whole roof threatened to come tumbling down over our heads; but it all held together, and, in spite of the rain, in spite of the mosquitoes and ants, in spite of the snakes, in spite of sickness that came, we were a cheerful lot, most of the time at least, and God was wonderfully kind to us. He tempered the rain storms. He delayed them, for they did not come quite so early as usual, nor continue quite so long. He drew the hearts of the people to us, and we found favor with them. He sent us many kind friends to sympathize and cheer us, from the outside world. And, above all, He healed our sick and preserved our lives through it all.

X

THE DIGNITY OF LABOR

Our rainy season on the Sobat begins about the first of May and continues until the end of October. But it was well on into July before we had our houses in shape to afford the necessary protection. During these months we busied ourselves in many ways. The grounds had to be cleared and kept clean and, as far as possible, free from tall grass and weeds which might afford hiding places for snakes and other pests. Ground was also cleared away, dug over with mattocks, and planted with vegetables, corn, wheat, cotton, etc. All this was by way of experiment. A garden for the growing of vegetables for our table seemed a necessity. No vegetables or fruits of any kind are produced by the people. *Bamiyah* or okra grows wild, but is not very good. Also the *melukhiyah* of Egypt, a kind of mallow, grows abundantly and of splendid quality. But of our ordinary garden vegetables there were none.

We found but little difficulty in growing most kinds of common vegetables, and very soon had a supply for our table, which we managed to main-

tain with care and irrigation even during the dry months of the year. The tomatoes were especially fine, and served in a double capacity of fruit and vegetable. Sweet potatoes also grew with but little care and all through the year. However, our wheat failed, as also our potatoes. On the other hand cotton was very successfully grown. Fruit trees were also started and, some of them at least, bid fair to do well.

In all this work we had much to contend with in the insect life, which was abundant; and from the flocks of sheep and goats that roamed everywhere. But our object was twofold. It was not to grow vegetables only, but to give employment to the people, to teach them to do something, and to bring them under our influence.

Our principle was that without labor,—productive, useful labor,—there could be no development of character. We must teach the people to *do* something, before we can expect them to *be* anything. We took advantage of every opportunity to get them to labor. They were employed in all sorts of work about our compound. There was a man to milk and herd the cows; a woman was employed to fill the water jars daily; a corn-stalk fence was built around the premises; ground, for planting, was cleared of grass.

The weeds and grass grew so fast that it kept

constant watching and care to keep the grounds even in respectable appearance. The clearing of the ground on the low land, where we planted, was done by the natives, and after their own fashion. For this purpose they use a little tool, that for the lack of a better name, we call a hoe. It is a flat piece of iron, generally a circle, or semi-circle, into one edge of which is fitted a handle of wood a foot or a foot and a half long. While digging, they squat on the ground, grasp the grass by the top and pull and dig it up by the root. With the native people this is all the preparation the soil receives, but for our own garden, we had all the soil cleared of grass, then stirred first with a mattock and later with a plow.

We thus employed a considerable number of men, and coming, as they often did, from villages a considerable distance away, we were enabled to extend our influence. Then too, as Dr. McLaughlin and I had to become their teachers in all this work, and our teaching was by object lessons, it brought us into touch with them, and we gained an influence that perhaps would not have been gained, certainly not in the same time, by any other method.

Thus, little by little, some of them at least began to appreciate the advantage of being with us and laboring for us; and, little by little, they learned

something of a day's labor and what it meant; and something of the meaning of responsibility in labor, of which they had been entirely ignorant.

This, too, gave us opportunity to discriminate between a good and faithful workman and one who was not, by praising the work done, or rewarding the workman in some way.

It was some time before the lesson was wholly mastered. They could not understand what we meant by a "day's work." At this time we needed the services of a good many men, for we were planning to make brick and build houses that would be better fitted to endure the rain storms. There is no building material in all that region of country, and even yet the kind of buildings suited to our need is a problem. Lime can not be had nearer than Khartum, nearly six hundred miles away, and transport expenses are very heavy. The white ant and other insects constituted another problem, and the climate still another. Each of these needed to be considered in determining the kind of structure we would build. We determined to try brick as being a possibility, and most likely to suit our need. But neither Dr. McLaughlin nor I had ever made a brick, nor had we ever given the subject much thought. We did, however, have this advantage over the Shulla: We knew what a brick looked

like, and knew a *good* brick from a bad one. We meant to try to make brick and we wished the Shulla men to help us.

We called a number of them together and explained what we intended to do; that we would employ them at the same wage as we had been paying, viz.: 3 piasters (15 cents) a day. This had been considered by us as a very big wage, but "necessity knows no law," and we had been compelled to pay it.

To American workmen this sum seems very small, but it is as much as *four dollars* a day for similar work in America. Indeed, it is even greater than that, for without this income at all they could live comfortably and comparatively at ease. Houses cost but little labor, while furniture and clothing cost nothing at all. There are no rents, taxes, school rates, charities, or other expenditures. Food is the only item of expense, and this only involves the labor of growing and harvesting the grain.

We had therefore no thought of increasing the wage, but on the other hand we proposed to insist on a day's work for the sum paid. That is to say, we would begin in the early morning and continue until noon, and begin again in the afternoon from about three o'clock and work on until the sun went down. They would be paid but once every week,

and the man who slighted his work or idled his time would have his wages cut down accordingly.

All this was explained to them very carefully, that there might be no misunderstanding about the matter. They assented and *thought* they understood what it meant; but they did not. We knew this from the beginning, but here was just the lesson we had set about to teach them. We were more independent now, as we could dispense with their labor altogether, and suffer no great inconvenience. Still we *did* wish to succeed, and if they refused to work at all, our lesson would be lost.

We had secured two "professional" (?) brickmakers from Khartum, who, as it turned out, knew but little more about making brick than we did, and, moreover, the Shulla did not like to be placed under their authority; so it required the time of at least one of us to superintend and "keep the peace."

The reader can imagine, I think, better than I can explain, the bitterness of soul that we experienced during the next few weeks. The men would come to us and say: "Old man! I am going to die; my back hurts me, and my chest hurts me, and my legs hurt me. I am going to die! Give me my money and I will quit!" But we would laugh at them and chaff them, and but few of

them did quit work until they had completed a week at least.

Dr. McLaughlin and I knew exactly how they felt over the matter. They were performing a kind of service that brought into use muscles that had never been used before, and naturally enough, to them the case looked serious, and "the game not worth the powder." At last, the lesson was most satisfactorily learned.

Dr. McLaughlin had to leave us in January, but we kept up the work all through the following months,—the hottest season. They were paid every Saturday night. Every case of delinquency was reported to us, and the pay was according to the work done. In some cases where greater faithfulness had been manifest the amount of wage was even increased. Very seldom was there a complaint of injustice done, and those rewarded for their faithfulness made no display of the fact; and it required very close scrutiny to observe any appreciation of our discrimination in their favor.

A quotation from one of Mrs. Giffen's letters will express more of their real sense of gratitude than they ever expressed in any other way:

"It was on a Saturday evening. Our custom was to take a long walk every evening, but Mr. Giffen had to pay the men and could not come with me, and I went out alone. There had been a num-

ber of young men, from sixteen to twenty years of age, working that week, and as I was returning they met me. Long before they came within speaking distance they began shouting, 'Mother! mother! how is your day. We are coming! We all have our pay! we are happy,' etc. Each had his spear and they were all feeling particularly good-humored. When they came up to me they stopped, and I had to see the money of each of them. Some had it tied in a corner of the cloth, which is their clothes, when they have any; others had it tied in a bit of dirty rag, and the rag tied to the top of the spear handle; others held it in their hands; and still others had to spit it out of their mouths, that I might see it.

"They all talked at once and I could not understand much of what was said, but I knew when they were telling me that '*jaal Duwong* (the big man or chief) is good.' I pretended to think they meant the chief of their village, but they shouted and sang—'No, *jaal Duwong* of *faj Ta tuga; jaal Duwong* of *faj Ta tuga!*' (The big man of the village by the doleib trees, i.e. of the Mission compound.) Then, before they left, the whole lot formed a circle around me, and with the right arm held high, balancing the spear, they began dancing and singing. An unusual amount of saliva was flowing and I had a regular shower bath before

they were ended. When I left them they shook hands with me. This is not their custom, but they think it is ours; and as I put my hand into each big, black hand, they shouted with laughter and said: 'Oh! it is little,' and went off along the path toward their village, shouting, singing, and dancing, with much brandishing of spears and beating down imaginary foes or hiding from them. A happy, happy lot of children."

We could but rejoice at the change that was gradually coming into the lives of these young men and boys. Here lay our hope for the future. Each of those young men had done six days' work, and they were beginning to feel all the better for it. Some of them began to save their money to buy a cow, and get more cows, and thus to eventually gratify their highest ambition—get a wife. But other ambitions will eventually come into the lives of these young men, and we will be able to lift them up into higher views of life. The lesson we set out to teach had been learned, unconsciously perhaps. They had learned that we meant to treat them justly; that without an effort they need not expect to gain anything; and since we labored with them as they did, it could not be a mean thing to labor. They were *not slaves*, and yet as free men they must labor in order to gain. Some higher ambitions and nobler thoughts had been implanted

in these savage breasts. Our ambition, too, had been in a measure satisfied. The Shullas were ready to work.

There was another lesson along this same line of industry that we undertook to teach them, and that was to produce something from their fertile, but untilled plains. They had herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and goats, and in these they took a certain pride. But even these they did not produce for sale, nor for exchange for other commodities, except for the one precious thing—a wife.

The growing of grain or other products of the soil for market had never entered their savage minds. And why should it? They had never had a market, and why should they produce more than was required to satisfy their own simple wants? It is hardly human to do so. Men produce only that for which they can find a market, and when the market is supplied they cease to produce. This is a natural law. We do not labor anywhere for the simple pleasure it affords. Yet labor is the only true index of character, and the only means of lifting men up and of preserving human society from degeneracy. The natural law, from which we may not depart, is, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." It is God's law. It was given not only

as a punishment *for* sin, because it was the result *of* sin, but also to preserve mankind from the curse of idleness in a state of sin. Idleness from any cause is to be deplored, and when the great mass of the people are idle when they might be at work, a deplorable state of things results.

We could find employment for a few of these people, but only for a *very* few, while in these great fertile plains there was employment for *all*, if we could but get them to believe it. This was our task. How were we to accomplish it? We exhorted them to plant. We even promised to buy their grain. The universal reply was "Ah-h-h! *Booh!*" They *could* not understand. They had been accustomed to planting just enough for their own use—a few acres for each family. If they had more, what could they do with it? The ants or the weasels would destroy it. If the season was bad and they had too little, they could get through somehow. Even a little hunger was better than useless exertion. It required little to sustain life under such conditions.

When harvest time came we proposed to the commandant at the military post at Taufikiyah, that we should buy corn from the people for the use of the soldiers. The commandant was very anxious to procure the corn, but expressed a doubt as to our being able to buy. It was his opinion that they

did not have the corn or would not part with it; but he promised to take all that we could buy. The price and the measure were fixed, and we gave out word to the people that we were ready to buy all the corn they would bring us.

At first they were very shy of any such proposition. They brought some corn, but in gourds of a few quarts each. Two or three weeks passed. We had begun to think that our venture would fail. Finally they began to bring it in basketfuls, and we filled all the bags that were sent us. We sent for more bags, and for two or three months we bought corn almost every day. We had some trouble in holding a fixed price. Several times the people carried away their grain because they did not receive the price they thought they should have. We were rather pleased at this than otherwise, as it showed an independence of spirit, and it also gave us an opportunity to prove that we had but one price which we considered a fair and honest equivalent for their grain.

They very soon learned that we had a fixed price and a fixed measure in everything. How much they appreciated such a market was clearly shown, and the wisdom of creating such a market was fully justified, for when we counted up the sales of the season, these amounted to about two hundred and fifty *ardebs*, or about twelve hundred

bushels. For this we had paid out about three hundred and fifty dollars.

In this little business transaction, which proved so satisfactory to us, although involving an immense amount of trouble, we had a two-fold purpose. The primary object was to bring the people to us, and thus give an added opportunity for influence, at the same time preventing their going to do their trading to places where they might learn very objectionable methods. While we bought of them and paid them cash for their produce, they in turn patronized our store and paid cash for what they bought of us.

The second purpose we had in view was, to create in them an ambition to cultivate their fields, and to produce something more than merely enough to satisfy their immediate wants. We believe that when they are assured of a market for their produce they will do this. Our only fear has been that when they begin to produce something worth while an objectionable class of traders will be drawn to that section of country, and by their vicious methods, instead of creating intelligent industry and promoting an honest trade, will have the very opposite tendency; and demoralize a savage but simple people. Such has been the effect of the Arab traders all through Africa. European traders, of the class that would be

drawn to such a country, would be scarcely less objectionable. Treating the native with greater contempt, unless restrained by law, they would certainly bring about the annihilation of the tribes by furnishing them with strong alcoholic liquors.

To forestall all such trade if possible, it has been our aim to provide the people with goods, such as they may require, at the smallest possible cost to them, but with a certain profit to us; at the same time providing them with a market for such produce as they may have, at the highest possible price. In short, our aim has been to establish, develop, and control an honest trade that would stimulate the people to honest toil and to a simple, temperate life, preserving as far as possible their native simplicity, while helping them up to a better life.

In all we attempted to do for them we aimed to gain their confidence. For many generations, indeed in almost all their dealings with the white man, they have known him as a despoiler only. Under the guise of government, they have been robbed of their property, and their women and children have been carried away into slavery. Naturally they were suspicious of the present Government and of us too, whom they regarded as some sort of agents for the Government.

One of the most pathetic incidents, revealing much of the heart of the people, and explaining their attitude toward us and the present Government, came in a conversation one day with the chief man of the villages which surrounded our station.

We had been there for some months, and thought we had gained much confidence from the people. We had a friend visiting us and this chief, Ariu, had called in honor of our guest. After some conversation, our friend said to Ariu: "Now you have a good and righteous Government; it will protect you, and will help you; it will fight your battles if need be. And these missionaries will teach your children; will help you cultivate your lands; will find a market for your grain, and they have The Book and will teach you of God; you ought now to be quiet and peaceable. Till your lands and care for your herds."

After a good deal of deliberation and smoking, Ariu laid his pipe aside and replied:

"Master, you speak well. We had here the Turks (old Egyptian Government) and they said 'Be submissive to us; we will protect you, we will fight your battles for you, we will teach you of God.' But they took our cattle, they destroyed our villages, and carried away our women and children into slavery, and they are gone. Then came

the Ansar (the Mahdists) and they said: 'Come with us, we have a great army; we will care for you and protect you; we will give you plenty to eat, and a good place to live; we have The Book and we will teach you the truth and teach you of God.' But they slew our men, and right here where these missionaries built their houses many of our men fell fighting for their women and children. They took away our cattle, destroyed our villages, carried off our women and children, and they too have gone. Now you come and say: 'We will care for you; we will protect you, we will fight for you, we have *The Book;* we will teach you.' Master, you speak well; but we will see."

This brief, pathetic story, a review of their whole history, reveals everything. It is no wonder they are naturally suspicious even of those who try to help them. The black man is forgiving in nature and soon forgets; at least, he is willing to forget, and is most susceptible to kind treatment.

The present Government is doing much, no doubt, to remove the suspicion of the people; but a feeling so deep seated, and so reasonably grounded, is not easily eradicated. There is then all the more reason why their every interest should be carefully guarded. Any little seeming in-

justice might lead to serious results; and certain it is that only by continual kindly treatment and by strengthening every confidence gained can the people be lifted up out of their present degradation.

XI

DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PEOPLE

From the foregoing chapters the reader will have formed some idea of the condition of the people as they appeared to us on our arrival at Doleib Hill. I have mentioned that the men were all, or nearly all of them, naked, and even those who had made some attempt at covering their nakedness were but little better off than those who did not. The women, however, were more decently covered with skins of animals. I quote again from Mrs. Giffen's diary written at the time, for first impressions are more striking and take notice of many things which later pass unobserved:

"I know you will wish to know something of the people, but because I have felt so unequal to the task of describing them I have been fighting shy of it all along. They came in crowds the day we arrived and have been here in crowds ever since. They are here as soon as it is light and stay until dark.

"The women are strong and well formed. The young ones are rather pretty for all their black skins; or perhaps because of their black skins,

which are so soft and smooth. The old women, like some of the rest of us, are not so fair to look upon. They shave their heads, and, across their foreheads—where wrinkles come—they have from one to three rows of small scars. These scars are often simply impressions made in the flesh by wearing bands of buttons drawn tightly across the forehead. Their ears are pierced at the top, and they wear rings of brass or iron. Sometimes you see them with bits of wood or stalks of grass, as thick as a lead-pencil, in these holes.

"The four front teeth in the lower jaw are almost invariably extracted. This gives rather an odd and aged appearance even to the young. I asked why this was done, and was told that 'it was to keep them from using abusive language.' I think that likely a mistake, however, and if true, I doubt its effectiveness, for they talk so much and so fast that I imagine sometimes it is not all free from abuse. Mr. Giffen says he thinks it is a mark of servitude, as he has understood that those of the royal line do not follow this custom. I suppose there had to be some mark of distinction between royalty and the common folk, and as this could not be made in any insignia of dress, they remove the front teeth. This custom extends to the men as well as the women.

"As regards the clothes of the women, first of

SHULLA GIRL OF THE SOBAT REGION

all there is a small apron. This is a piece of coarse cloth—originally white—about two feet long and eighteen inches wide. It is made of two thicknesses, and it is tied by strings fastened to two corners around the waist, but just below the abdomen, and falls down to the knees.

"Then there are two skins, of sheep, goat, calf, gazelle or whatever it may be, tanned with the hair on, and worn with the hair side out. One of these is tied around the waist, using one fore leg and one hind leg of the skin for strings to tie with. The tail and the other two legs—or the skin of them—dangle and flap around the legs as ornaments. Indeed these are sometimes ornamented with beads, brass or iron rings. This skin is tied in front so as to show the white (?) apron underneath.

"The other skin is worn on the upper part of the body. The fore and hind legs on one side are fastened together at their very tips; this is then slipped over the head, the legs of the skin thus tied togther resting on the right shoulder, and the other side passing under the left arm. This is the full dress of a woman. Of course in addition to this they may wear as many beads and other ornaments as they can afford; strings of beads around the waist, neck, and arms, and armlets of brass; sometimes as many as ten or twelve brass or iron rings, weighing several pounds, and extending

from the hand half way to the elbow. These are not loose, but drawn tight to the flesh and each made fast by the blacksmith. Dr. McLaughlin and Mr. Giffen removed some rings from one woman's arm where the flesh was actually cut by them. What delight they can find in wearing these, I cannot imagine, unless they are doing some sort of penance. They surely would answer very well for mortifying the flesh, but I doubt their efficacy in working grace in the heart. Similar rings of iron are often worn by the older women on the ankle. These are very heavy and produce great knots in the flesh.

"The little girls wear the apron only, and when a little older put on the shoulder skin, and when full grown wear the skin about the waist. I should mention that a belle among them is often distinguished by having small sleigh-bells attached to the waist-skin—shall I call them skirts?—so fastened about the lower edge that they jingle as she walks.

"They have rather large hands and feet, but, one thing very noticeable both here and in Omdurman, all black women, who go almost naked, have the fashionable upright form very pronounced. So you see we are not entirely out of the fashion even in the Sudan. And the way these people do walk! You would think they all belonged to royalty.

"The women, too, much to my disgust, are given to the use of tobacco, both chewing and smoking, so much so that I felt like mentioning the pipe as among the articles of clothing. The pipe, which is made of clay and is as large as a tea-cup, has a long stem, crowned with a small gourd for a mouth piece. Everywhere they go they carry this pipe and draw and draw at it in quick jerks, even when they have neither tobacco nor fire. And sometimes in lieu of tobacco they go to our fire and fill the pipe with live wood coals, which seems to quite satisfy them. The first time we saw them do this we were alarmed, but as there seemed to be no evil results we ceased to feel anxious.

"The chewing habit, which is more prevalent among the girls and young women, is much more annoying to me, and the wad is so large that it even disfigures them. Just now there were a lot of girls in our tent all chewing and spitting. We protested, but they only seemed amused. Finally Mr. Giffen arose and ran out of the tent saying: 'I prefer to go out to being drowned out.' The men are much less given to this habit than the women; nearly all the old men use the pipe.

"The men are physically fine. It would turn some of our college boys 'green with envy' to see some of the best specimens.

"To begin with their heads, the dressing of the

hair is in different styles. Here it is most common for the women to shave the head, but often the men spend much care on theirs. Some of the men shave the head, and always remove the beard by pulling it out by the roots, just as they clear a field of grass and weeds. But a man's crown is his glory, especially when well groomed or rather padded.

"I have remarked there is no prevailing style; one will allow the hair to grow on the crown, with the base shaved so as to give the hair—wool—on the top the appearance of a cap. Even in these caps there is variety. Sometimes they are shaped quite round; again oblong, to look a bit like a 'Glengary.' Then some may be exactly on the top of the head; others a little to one side, or well back on the head, which gives them a jaunty air. Then there is the 'helmet' style, if I may so call it, which must be seen to be understood. How shall I describe it? The hair is matted together to look much like the coarse felt of a saddle cloth. How they do this I have been unable to learn. Imagine, if you can, a piece of this felt cut circular so as to fit the curve of the head from the forehead to the neck at the back, and projecting front and back to form the rim of the helmet, and then shorn off at the sides to complete the crown of the helmet.

"Another very common form is the shape of a

halo, or a flat piece of the felt attached to the back of the head, resembling much the rim of a black felt hat without a crown, placed on the back of the head, while the fore part of the head and down to the ears is clipped short. There is the cock's comb shape—notched on top, and many other shapes that I cannot name or describe.

"They are exceedingly fond of light or blonde hair, and often you see a plaster of ashes all over the head, worn thus for several days while the hair is in the process of bleaching. To accomplish this they pat the plaster well into the wool and then with the hands gather it up from the back and bring it all forward, leaving it in the shape of a single horn in front. While in this state, they must be very careful not to break it, lest they break the hair all off. This bleaching process takes all the kink out as well as the color, and, when finished, it stands out in all directions like the feathers on a fighting cock. The color is not very pleasing to my taste; it very much resembles the hair of a yellow dog.

"Another style, very common to both men and women, is to allow the hair to grow to some considerable length—as long as it will—and then anoint it well with a pomade of their own mixing from brick dust and tallow, after which it is twisted into tiny ringlets which fall down from the

crown in all directions, especially over the forehead and eyes. With all styles they wear feathers, from an ostrich plume to a cock's tail.

"They have fine teeth when these are allowed to grow, but the men, like the women, extract the front teeth of the lower jaw. Some of the men wear ear-rings, but these are the exception. Many wear beads on neck and waist, and armlets of ivory. Some of these armlets are beautiful, and, in striking contrast to the black skin, add an artistic charm to the appearance. Bracelets of copper and brass adorn the wrist and forearm. Then there is always the spear and the club, and behold! a Shulla in full dress!

"Some of the men wear a cloth covering, and the number who do so is increasing. Of course it is a very simple affair: A piece of unbleached cotton about two and a half yards long, and the width of the cloth; double it in the middle and knot two of the corners, and the garment is complete. Pass this over the head, with the knotted corners on the left shoulder and the cloth under the right arm, and you have a sleeveless, neckless shirt, open from the shoulder down the left side. This, with the exception of the beads and other ornaments already described, is the outfit of the most elaborately dressed man.

"What I have been describing is the common,

ordinary dress. They have also a dress for festal occasions, which, if possible, is more scant than the everyday article. Their dance, which I imagine is partly social and partly religious, may occur at any season, night or day. Sometimes they spend several days in dancing. When the mosquitoes are numerous, they confine their dances to the daytime. On these occasions the men in particular are in fine feather. The spears are newly polished, and on the handle is tied a new tuft of wool or feathers, either black or white, white being preferred, and, if they can get it, a strip of red cloth is tied on, too. Then they carry their shields and dancing sticks. The ordinary shoulder cloth which we have described is discarded; if they can afford it, a skin is worn instead, not as a covering but as a decoration. A leopard skin, or part of one, is preferred, but a wild-cat skin is more common; we call these *kilts* for lack of a better name, but as a matter of fact they are not kilted at all but fastened quite smoothly around the waist—tied in front. Usually this kilt is just long enough to come half way to the knee. If they can afford it, a red sash is added, but very few are so fortunate. Below the knee is a strip of sheep or goatskin with the hair on, just a narrow band to which is attached small bells or anything that will jingle. The hair is usually well done up, and

from every crown springs a nodding plume. The whole body is oiled almost to dripping and shines like—well, like a black body oiled. To make themselves more hideous—but they say because the women admire them—the body thus dripping is sometimes covered with red dust or burned clay and fantastically striped with ashes.

"The women accompany the men, for in the Sudan the dance is promiscuous; but they are more modestly attired, as becomes the weaker sex. Theirs is the ordinary dress, with shoulder skin removed, thus uncovering them from the waist up, giving an extreme low-neck and short-sleeve effect. Jangling bells and rings, in evidence in these ball costumes, rattle like 'the pearly teeth of the nut-brown maiden.' They too are much oiled. This oiling of the body is more unpleasant than in Omdurman. I mean unpleasant to the American, though I believe the Shulla finds it sweet. In Omdurman the oil is perfumed with spices of all kinds, and the freshly anointed body greets you from afar rather pleasantly. Here too, the odor is often wafted from afar, but the odor is of rank grease."

If left alone, I have no doubt the dress of the people would remain very much as it is and has been for centuries, viz.: a coat of grease ornamented with a few beads. But they cannot be

left alone. Civilization will come in upon them, whether they wish it or not, and the savage and uncultivated is almost certain to adopt all that is objectionable.

Missionaries are generally charged with bringing about dress reform among the half civilized and savage races. Possibly missionaries exert an influence in this direction, as do other representatives of the more civilized nations residing in these countries; but it is not the missionary's wish or intention to do so. It is simply the influence that the stronger character always has over the weaker, manifesting itself in an inevitable imitation of those things that are most striking and generally least important. This is by no means confined to dress only, and the result is often to be deplored.

In illustration of what I mean, the case of Prince A-Ko-Kwin is in place. On his first visit to us he wore a princely robe, as has been described. This robe was no doubt a gift; it pleased his fancy and he wore it. Later on the Prince made a visit to Khartum, and the diaries described his appearance after his return:

"Prince A-Ko-Kwin appeared in camp. He had gone to Khartum, and arrived at Taufikiyah, on a postal steamer, yesterday evening. He has been rigged out in European costume of a blue-grey color, a new tarboosh (fez), a pair of French

brown leather boots, an umbrella, a riding whip and a finger ring. He evidently felt fine, and appeared very comic. A-Ko-Kwin is a very tall man, but his height is mostly legs, with corresponding long arms. He is very slender, and no longer as to body than many a shorter person. In fitting him with a suit, only the body of the coat had apparently been taken into consideration, without thought as to the length of sleeve or the trousers. In consequence he looked as if dressed in a hurry and run too far through. Had I been asked for advice, I should have suggested cutting the sleeves at the elbow and inserting puffs; and for the covering of the lower limbs, to meet the deficiency, a half-yard of deep umbrella frills at the bottom. He 'had no idea of a city so large and so fine.' And the 'women there were all just like you.' That time the 'gift was gied me to see myself as others see me,' and I was not flattered! But evidently in more things than in dress had he tasted of civilized life. He asked for some brandy, and insisted that we must have it, 'for all white men in Khartum drink it.' I fear his stay in the capital was not good for his morals. The strip of muslin and ivory armlet, with a shining spear, was certainly much more becoming than the *frangi* (European) outfit."

As one proceeds up the Sobat River toward

Abyssinia the people are still more nude, if possible. Among the Dinka and Nuer tribes, as we saw them, even the women often made no attempt to cover their nakedness. At one large village we saw one person only who had any covering. In other places there would be a few exceptions only.

When Dr. McLaughlin and I made our trip of exploration on the Sobat, we came into the first village of the Dinkas on a Saturday evening. Even to our untrained eye the difference between them and the Shullas was noticeable. It was not so much in the form and features of the people as in the way they built their houses, made their spears, and in their general appearance. The covering of their bodies was much more scant. I believe it is the general impression of those who have come most closely into contact with the two tribes, that the Dinkas are more intelligent and more enterprising than the Nuers and Shullas. This did not seem to us to be the case, if intelligence and enterprise was to be measured by their habits of life. The Dinkas had larger herds, but this could easily be accounted for from the fact that they had suffered less from the raids of the Mahdi in recent years, their places being a little more remote from the line of travel. We still have the impression that the Shullas are a rather royal people among the blacks.

On the Saturday afternoon mentioned we were very tired. It had been hot, and we had been walking nearly all week, in narrow paths shut in by tall grass. The ground was cracked and hard and little sharp clods almost cut through our shoe soles. We were very weary, but were pressing on to reach this village where we expected to spend the Sabbath.

The village was like all Dinka villages that we have seen. The houses were small, circular mud walls, thatched with grass, and in detached groups, scattered over a mile along or near the river bank. We walked on through this village until we came to the place of residence of the chief, for whom we inquired. We were told that he would come presently. In the middle of an open dust-covered court we threw ourselves down in the shadow of a corn-stalk fence to wait the arrival of the patriarch.

At intervals, as time passed, we would arouse ourselves and ask if the chief was not coming, and would always receive the reply "at once." At last we heard a commotion on the opposite side of the court, and looking up saw coming a most uncommon creature whom we supposed to be the chief, surrounded by his advisers and a throng of people. Not one in the crowd was dressed or had any attempt at clothing except the chief himself

and, in contrast to his people, he had rather an excess of clothing, being clad from head to foot. As he approached us with great dignity, in a manner evidently meant to impress, (and we *were* impressed), Dr. McLaughlin and I arose to meet him. Not daring to look at the doctor, I could *feel* rather than see that he was convulsed with laughter. Outwardly, I think I was very calm. We saluted. A skin was placed for the chief, and we all sat down.

The king's outfit—the chief is called *mek*, or king—was of European cut, from yellow or unbleached cotton cloth. He wore underneath a great striped red and white athlete's shirt. Each garment was wrong side out, and evidently he had had some difficulty in managing the buttons. The coat was next to the shirt, and the vest over the coat, and from all directions pockets protruded. On his head was an embroidered smoking-cap.

Silence followed his appearance, and for some little time I did not venture to speak. We finally told him that we were travelers passing through his country and wished the privilege of stopping in his village. We explained that the following day was sacred to our God, and that we did not work, but that we wished to rest, and with his permission we would pass the time in his village. He was rather slow at making reply, but first asked

us where we were from. We replied that we were from America. This puzzled him. He knew of many black tribes, and he knew of two white tribes—the English and the French; but he had never heard of the Americans. "Are you like the English?" he asked. "Yes," we replied, "very much like them; we speak the same language!" "But," we continued, "we are a different people from either the French or English." After thinking a little, he said: "You see this suit of clothes?" "Yes," we said we did. "Well, the French gave me this," and then he hesitated and looked at us. We made no reply. "When the Governor passed this way," he continued, "I presented myself in these to do him honor. I thought he would be pleased, but he seemed to be very angry, and asked me where I got them. When I told him from the French, he said to me: 'Take them off; the French have nothing to do with this country.' I did not know whether you were French or English, nor how you might regard my clothes." Either the explanation, or the smile that accompanied it, proved satisfactory, for after that, during the next two or three days, he wore that suit with several variations, and several times appeared without it, but always at perfect ease.

The habit of wearing no clothing at all is rather shocking at first, but one soon becomes accus-

tomed to it. In a climate where it is never colder than 50 degrees Fahrenheit, and where the temperature is generally much above that, the addition of clothing would seem to be, to the native, foolishness. We did not attempt to instruct them directly on the subject. The law of example, however, soon began to operate. They began to buy cloth and to cover themselves. Twelve months after we had arrived on the Sobat, in the circle over which we had had an influence, there was not perhaps one man in twenty but had made some attempt at clothing.

There was too a very noticeable difference in their deportment while in our presence. Just what the difference was is not easily explained, but it was clearly a change of conduct toward us, and we believe a change for the better. Something new had come into their lives; an influence that would remain. In their attempt to copy us they had begun with the visible—but, unconsciously perhaps, they were learning deeper things.

XII

ORIGIN OF THE SHULLA TRIBE AND TRADITIONS

There is great similarity among the beliefs, habits, and customs of the Sudanese tribes, and yet there are very essential differences. No two tribes have the same traditional origin for the human race, or, more strictly speaking, for their own especial tribe, since they do not attempt to account for the human race as a whole, but apparently suppose each tribe to have had a distinct origin.

So far as we are able to learn, they all believe in a Great Creator of all things, the primal power and source of all life.

Their sense of duty and responsibility to this Creator—whom the Shullas call *Jo-uk*—is not very great, although in some way he enters into their fortunes and misfortunes, successes and failures, pleasures and sorrows, and almost every condition of life. For instance, if a man dies suddenly, is slain or drowned, it is considered a judgment of *Jo-uk*, and because of some sin not perhaps known to his fellow-men.

When one is ill, they say *erra Jo-uk*, or "why,

Creator?" thus attributing the sickness to this primal power, and inferring that there must have been some cause existing in the person so afflicted.

Generally evil is attributed to *Jo-uk*, but not so often does he seem to be the author or source of good; that is, the direct source of blessing, although if closely questioned they will admit that this is true.

They have also expressions that imply their belief in the providence of *Jo-uk*. When they meet one in the way, a common salutation is *Yi keli Jo-uk* (God has carried you). To one starting on a journey, they say: *Yi kuri Jo-uk* (God keep or protect you). This has something of the meaning of our good-by or God be with you.

Yet so far as we have learned, there is no worship offered directly to *Jo-uk*, no sacrifices made to him, and no religious rites or duties performed in his name. Yet they do sacrifice too, and in some vague sense worship *Jo-uk*, through their *Nik-kang*, or tribal deity.

From their tradition we learn that the *Nik-kang* was *man*—a demi-god—and the direct creator or maker of the Shulla people. To him sacrifices are made, at least once a year at the beginning of the rainy season, and much of good and evil is attributed to him. This sacrifice consists in the slay-

ing of an animal by the priest of the village, for the people of his family or town who are assembled at the house of *Nik-kang*. Worship is made to *Nik-kang;* the animal is slain with a holy spear, the flesh divided among the people according to rule, cooked, and eaten. Then follows a dance, with much drinking of *marisa* (a fermented drink) to keep their hearts merry. The dancing and drinking may be kept up for several days, and no doubt is, or has been, a part of their worship; indeed it seems to be *all* of their worship. For these annual religious festivals there is a special house or temple. In every village there is also a small temple, modeled after the fashion of the greater ones. Here the elders of the people assemble, around it rather than in it, for the transaction of serious business, and to call on their god to witness in all covenants. No village is without its small temple, or house of *Nik-kang*, and it is the only building upon which any ornamentation is attempted. It is called too "the house of *Nik-kang*," not the house of *Jo-uk*.

They believe that *Jo-uk* is everywhere, and that every man when he dies is with *Jo-uk*.

They have no word for heaven as a place of eternal abode, and no idea of a hell, although they say *Jo-uk* may not admit to his presence some who have been very bad; but it is not known what be-

comes of such. *Yi-e Jo-uk*, or "along with God," was the best expression we could find for heaven. The old man who gave me this history, catching at our idea of hell, said: "*Watt maj*," or "house of fire."

To make the foregoing intelligible we must know something of the traditional origin and history of the Shulla people.

When I asked Ej-ja-win (Mr. Pond)—who, with elder Ariu, gave me most of my information on this subject—for a history of the Shulla, he began with, 'Nik-kang was the son of U-kwa.' I interrupted him to ask for the ancestors of U-kwa. He replied: "I was just going to give you that," and then proceeded to trace them back for four generations. The fourth generation back from *Nik-kang* was *D'ung Adduk*, or White Cow. This to the Shulla is the origin of his race. *D'ung Adduk* was the creation of *Jo-uk*, and came up out of the Nile. She gave birth to a man child whom she nursed. This man was called *Kola;* his son was *U-mah-ra;* and his son *Wad-Maul;* and his son was *U-kwa*, the father of *Nik-kang*. This constitutes one epoch in their history—from White Cow to *U-kwa*, four generations.

It is not known where these people lived, or from where came the mothers of the race after the first one, *i.e.* the White Cow; but doubtless in some

miraculous way they were provided. The place where the race originated was supposed to be "a long way off."

U-kwa, when a young man, lived somewhere near the river. Many times he had observed two maidens come up out of the water and sport in the shallows near the bank. He had often asked a drink of them, but was always refused. He noticed that their faces were very beautiful and their hair long; but the lower part of their bodies was like the form of a crocodile.

U-kwa was sorely vexed with these maidens who beguiled him to the river only to laugh at him and mock him, or dive back into the river and leave him astonished and chagrined. One day he came upon them suddenly as they sat together on the river bank. He grasped them in his arms and carried them away. Their screams brought their father up out of the river. His presence until now was unknown. He followed his screaming daughters to the house of *U-kwa*.

His appearance was rather terrifying, for the left side of his body was like the human form, but the right side was green in color and in form like the crocodile.

Terrified, *U-kwa* asked: "And who are you?" He answered: "I am *U-dil-jil*, the father of *Nik-ki-yah* and *Ung-wahd* whom you have

stolen. What do you mean to do with my daughters?" *U-kwa* replied: "I am going to take them for my wives." "No," answered *U-dil-jil*, "no one will marry these girls, and moreover they will give birth but once only."

But *U-kwa* was satisfied with his prize and the prospect; so they made a feast and he married the sisters. However, if tradition speaks not falsely, *Nik-ki-yah's* father was a false prophet, for she is accredited with five children—two sons and three daughters—and her sister with one, a son.

Now the remainder of this narrative is chiefly concerned with one son of *Nik-ki-yah*, her elder son, who like his mother and maternal grandfather, was part human and part crocodile. He was named *Nik-kang*.

At this point in the narrative Sheikh Ej-ja-win stopped, and declared that he could not continue the story, lest his ancestors, who are always hovering over this particular region, might become incensed by so frequent and familiar use of their names to strangers. I told him not to feel alarmed; that moreover I could not give him a bolt of muslin as I had meant to do, unless he would finish the narrative; and that besides, if his ancestors were as reasonable as I supposed them to be, they could not be vexed at him for giving the history, when the relating of it would bring

him a new robe. Neither could they be angry with me when I was willing to pay so much for it. He agreed with me that this did seem reasonable and proceeded:

U-kwa had three sons from a third wife, the eldest of whom was *Du-wad*. After their father's death there was some difficulty in determining who should be at the head of the kingdom, some wishing to make *Du-wad* king in his father's stead, and others preferring *Nik-kang*. The feeling grew so strong and the quarrel raged so madly that *Nik-kang*, with his brothers and sisters—his own mother's children—and *Jew*, his half-brother, the only son of his mother's sister, came away to the mouth of the Sobat River and there established a kingdom of their own, under *Nik-kang* as king, with *Omoi*, his full brother, and *Jew*, his half-brother, as his Ministers.

The *Nik-kang* had a creative power which he used greatly to the advantage of the new kingdom. In order to people the vast territory the more quickly, he proceeded to create a people from the animal life he found in the forests and rivers. From crocodile and hippopotami, from wild beasts and cattle, he formed men and women. When these had borne many children the parent stock was removed by death, that the children might never learn their origin. This new creation and

their offspring formed the Shulla race or the common people, in distinction from those descended directly from the *Nik-kang* and his family. The latter continue to bear authority, and fill the priestly office until this day. All outside the royal and priestly line are reckoned *Shulla*.

Nik-ki-yah, the mother of *Nik-kang*, still exists. She never died and never will, according to their tradition. The region of the Sobat and the White Nile near there are her favorite places of abode. She often appears, generally in the form of a crocodile, but at times in other forms, and always in the river or on its banks. No sacrifices are ever offered to her; when she desires she takes what is required from among men or beasts. When she does this, the people should never complain. Indeed it is a mark of distinction when *Nik-ki-yah* is pleased to take her sacrifice from a family, whether of man or of beast.

Sometimes, so the story goes, she returns her victim, after a longer or shorter period. Recently a boy is said to have disappeared from his village. Search was made for him, but he could not be found. After some months he reappeared, coming up out of the river. At first his head only appeared, then his shoulders, and finally, little by little, the whole body covered with mud and slime. After lying for some time in the sun, he arose and

walked to his house. For days he could not speak or understand the speech of men, but talked in a strange tongue. He had been with *Nik-ki-yah!* Other equally impossible stories are told and believed by every Shulla.

The *Nik-ki-yah* also becomes judge in certain difficult cases where evidence from other than the parties interested cannot be procured. The parties in dispute are taken to the river and with them a goat. They are made to wade down into the water up to the waist and remain there until the *Nik-ki-yah* decides by taking the guilty party. To help to the decision the goat is tied to a stake on the bank. It may be that the goat is for the purpose of allowing the *Nik-ki-yah* to give a decision proving both parties innocent, by taking the goat instead, but I believe the real purpose of the goat is to attract the crocodile to that particular spot by its continual bleating, for the rivers are full of crocodiles.

The beauty of this method of appeal to the *Nik-ki-yah's* judgment is that fear of and faith in the power and infallibility of the *Nik-ki-yah*, coupled with a bad conscience, usually brings confession. Then, of course, the trial is at an end.

To the *Nik-ki-yah* also are ascribed many wonderful miracles, but in actual practice it is to be feared she becomes a cloak for sin. Around

this mythical being and her demi-god son gather many superstitions which God's grace and truth alone can remove in *His* time from the life of this people.

What I have written applies to the Shulla tribe alone. There are several tribes of these black people in the Egyptian Sudan and each has its own traditions and mythical deity.

The following extract from a paper entitled "Religious Beliefs among the Natives of the Bahr el Ghazal," prepared by S. L. Cummins, M. D., of the Sudan Army Service, will give some idea of similar traditions among other tribes:

"The Dinka . . . have a most elaborate list of gods. At the head of the list are *Deng-dit* —rain-giver,—and *Abok*, his wife. They have two sons, *Kur Konga*, the elder, and *Gurung-dit*, the younger, and a daughter called *Ai-yak*.

"The devil is called *L'wal Burrajok*, and he is the father of *Abok*, the wife of *Deng-dit*. There are other relatives, but I have given sufficient.

"Their story of the origin of mankind, or it may be of the Dinka tribe only, is as follows:

"*Deng-dit* gave to his wife, *Abok*, a bowl of fat, and she and her children softening the fat over the fire, proceeded to mold from it men and women in the image of the gods.

"*Deng-dit* warned her against *L'wal*—the evil

spirit—who was suspected of having evil intentions toward *Deng-dit*. But *Abok* forgot the warning and, with her children, went to gather wood in the forest. *L'wal* found the bowl of fat, drank the greater part of it, and from the remainder proceeded to mold caricatures of men and women, with distorted limbs, mouths, and eyes. Then, fearing the vengeance of *Deng-dit*, he descended to earth by the path that then connected it with heaven.

"On discovering the result of her neglect, *Abok* hastened to tell her husband, who, greatly incensed, started in pursuit of *L'wal*. The latter, however, had persuaded the bird *Atoi-toish* to bite asunder with its bill, the path from heaven to earth and he thus escaped from the divine wrath.

"In spite of this complicated mythology, the Dinkas appear to be very indifferent to religion as an active principle of life. They are without any idea of prayer, and though they assert that their forefathers made great sacrifices to God, the present generation thinks twice before parting with a goat, to say nothing of a cow, for sacrificial purposes. Sacrifices constitute, however, their only attempt at intercourse with God. In fact, they seem to regard Him not as a Being likely to confer benefits, but as a destructive power, to be propitiated if possible."

Of the numerous other tribes in and around the Sobat region, we have no intimate knowledge, and have had no opportunity to learn anything concerning their religion or religious thought, but no doubt they are similar to these mentioned. A closer study of their language and habits of life will no doubt modify first impressions gained from a limited study of the people. It may take a long time to deliver these tribes from their superstitions and wean them from their mythical deities and enthrone in their lives the living and true God; but by His grace and spirit it can be done, and they are worth redeeming.

XIII

OCCUPATIONS AND CUSTOMS

As might be expected among a savage people, the occupation of the Sudanese tribes and of the Shullas in particular is almost entirely limited to the care of their herds of cattle, their flocks of sheep and goats, and to the cultivation of a very small portion of land. There are but two skilled trades, and these are so simple that *skill* is hardly a correct term to apply to them.

One of these is the roofer's trade, that of placing the thatch on the houses. Although this is very simple, there is a very great difference in the work of different men. The difference lies in the neatness and finishing touches. One leaves his roof rough and with loose ends projecting, while another will smooth up his, press it down solid, and beat it into shape.

In this respect there was a very noticeable difference between the houses of the Shullas and those of the Dinkas or Nuers. The latter almost invariably leave the roof with the appearance of being unfinished. Ends of grass protrude; while the Shulla roofer who has any respect for his own

reputation leaves his roof with a neatness which calls to mind a well groomed and neatly barbered head of hair.

The style of house among the tribes is practically the same. Almost anyone can build the walls, which are of mud. A little more skill is required in placing the rafters for the support of the roof and in tying the canes for the thatch. The framework of the roof is always made on the ground and placed on the walls like a great conical cap.

No nails or iron of any kind enter into these buildings. Rope is made from grass or leaves of the doom-palm. With this all the parts are tied together, and the latch is also fastened in place with rope. The door is a mat of grass or cane. There are no windows. Each house is a single room, or more properly, each house is a number of detached rooms; for as a rule each family has more than one of these little, conical, hay-stack huts. There are as a rule from two to five of these for each family, and they are placed in a semi-circle with the open space thus formed between them, enclosed with a fence of corn-stalks. However, the black people are not given to following rules, and they build as their fancy pleases. A village consists of a number of these family groups, generally so built as to leave a great open space in the center, which might be called the town

park. Here and there is sometimes a tree, but more often nothing to give shelter.

Every village has one or more stables, according to the size of the village, where the village herds are kept at night. These are built in the same form and of similar material as their dwellings, but with twice the diameter. In the center of each stable there is a place for fire, which is kept smoldering every night during the season when the mosquitoes are numerous. The smoke is for the protection of the cattle from the attack of the mosquito, and also for the men who always keep guard at night. The door is necessarily larger than that of a dwelling, but there are no windows or holes for ventilation, and when a mat is placed over the one opening and a smoke produced inside, it is a mystery to me how the cattle and men live.

In the dwelling the same plan is followed for the protection of their naked bodies from the savage attacks of the mosquitoes. A fire is kindled in the center of the one room. The fuel generally used is the refuse from the stables, dried in the sun. This creates a great deal of smoke with but little flame. Closing the door with a thick mat, they wrap themselves in a cloud of smoke and lie down to sleep. In addition to the garment of smoke, either for protection from the sting of

WORKMEN AT DOLEIB HILL

insects or to diminish somewhat the effect of the low temperature of the night during this season, they have the habit of covering their bodies with ashes. The effect as they emerge from their house in the morning is rather startling. It gives a ghostly appearance almost alarming.

The walls and floors of the houses are plastered with a thin mud rubbed on with the hand. This is the work of the women. The plaster fills in the holes and ridges left in building, and adds very greatly to the neat appearance of the houses. The only furniture is a forked limb for a head rest, and a pot for the *marisa*. A little wisp of grass makes a convenient broom. The houses are kept exceedingly neat, in spite of the lack of furniture, or perhaps because of it.

This *marisa*, to which we have referred, is the common drink, and almost the common food of the black people. It is found everywhere in the Sudan, and, indeed, throughout Africa. It is estimated by the people that two-thirds of all grain grown is used in the manufacture of this drink. It is generally made from the grain of sorghum, grown everywhere in the Sudan. The country is large and the division into tribes so numerous that there are many methods of brewing, or fermenting, but the most common may be described as follows:

The grain is placed in earthen jars and water poured over it. It is then allowed to stand until the grain has well sprouted. It is then spread in the sun to dry. When dry, it may be cleared of earth by shaking in a sieve made of grass fibers, then pounded or rubbed into a meal. It is then mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put, a second time, into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on top; the jars are covered with mats, and allowed to remain a day or two, or until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week.

With our black people on the Sobat a little less care is taken in its preparation. When finished it has very much the appearance of a bran mash, and in taste is like buttermilk.

This is practically the food of the people. For days together they may have nothing else. If anything is eaten besides the *marisa*, it will be a kind of porridge, also fermented, or the whole grain either boiled or uncooked. That this drink intoxicates there is no doubt, but as generally used by the blacks it is little more than a slight stimulant.

The only fruit on the Sobat, either wild or cultivated, is that of the doleib palm,* which although rather pleasant in flavor, is very fibrous and of but little value. The people cultivate no vegetables, and those growing in the wild state are of inferior quality and seldom eaten.

A domestic animal is never slain for food; their only supply of meat is from game and fish; although these abound they are not eaten in any great quantities as one would suppose. Indeed, the diet is almost exclusively the grain of the sorghum, as above described. They do not object to eating flesh, but do not wish to dispose of their cattle. These are not now held sacred, but the value they attach to them would lead one to suppose they had been so at some time, and the tradition of their origin from the cow would lend further support to this belief.

They have great herds of cattle, in which they take much pride, and breed and tend them with unusual care. The great plains, rich in pasture all the year through, make the raising of cattle a simple and easy occupation. The men and boys attend these herds while in pasture, drive them to water, sleep with them at night, but never use them as beasts of burden. Their only value seems to be their use as dowry in securing a wife and for

*Bœassus Aethiopicus

furnishing milk. From three to five head is the price of a wife. Few young men are able to possess a herd. For this reason they do not marry young, as is the custom in Egypt and among Mohammedans everywhere. This I think will account for their well formed bodies. The man with a family of daughters is an object of envy to every young man, because he possesses what the aspiring youth most covets—cattle and wives.

The dowry once provided, marriage is a very simple affair, and practically there is no divorce; the number of wives is limited only to the number of cattle one is able to possess. However, the exchange of cattle for a wife is really a public marriage contract, and is not a simple business transaction, for the wife thus secured is not a slave, to be sold or exchanged for another; she becomes a lawful wife that cannot be put away. The woman, too, gives her consent, without which no contract is made; a step in advance of some of the other half-civilized people of the Nile valley.

Among the Shulla there is a respect shown to the women that is not observed among the Mohammedans anywhere. The women assemble with the men, talk with them, discuss the affairs that interest them, accompany them everywhere, even to their dances and religious feasts. There is a reasonable division of labor also; while the men

tend the flocks, build the houses, and clear away the grass preparatory to the planting, the women help in planting, cultivating, and harvesting the grain; which seems only just, since the duties in the house are very light, indeed.

As an illustration of the esteem in which the women are held the following incident is in place:

One day a man brought a small quantity of grain which he wished to exchange for beads of a certain color. As it happened, there were no beads of that particular kind in the store. He refused to take any other, and carried the grain home again, saying, "My wife wished these only, and the corn is hers."

Affection of parents for children, too, is not wanting. It is an affection not usually seen even among a higher grade of civilized life. In Egypt abuse of children is so common that it is rare to find a child that has not a slavish dread of being beaten. When they enter school it has often been observed that any sudden motion, as the lifting of the hand without any intention to strike, will cause the child to cry out and shrink away with fear, or cover the face and head in alarm. There is none of this among the black children. The mother often places the infant in a long basket or bed made of grass; this she carries on her head or covers with a mat in some secure place,

while the child sleeps. The affection of the mother for her child may be somewhat akin to that of the brute mother for her offspring, but even this is natural at least, and often very tender.

The planting and cultivation of their fields is, like everything they do, very simple. The soil being so very fertile, it is only necessary to get the seed into the ground to insure a crop wherever there is the ordinary rainfall. Of cultivation, as we understand it, there is none. When the weeds and grass become too tall, they are pulled up, as when the ground was first prepared for planting. There is no stirring of the soil either before or after planting. Just enough ground is planted to supply needed food provided there be an ordinary rainfall; if the latter fails, there will probably be famine.

A very few of the men are blacksmiths, but their skill is limited to making spear heads, and forming, in a crude way, the metal ornaments worn by both men and women. Every man, wherever he goes, carries a spear. He never leaves his home without the spear, not even to go into the fields to work. Besides this, he will usually have two clubs. One is simply a long, tapering cane, heavy at one end. The other is about two feet and a half long, made in one solid piece of hard, heavy wood, with a big round knob at one end.

With either of these clubs one could deal a most effective blow.

In all the black man's domestic economy he simply labors in order to eat, and eats in order to live, while the highest enjoyment of life culminates in the dance. So we may say, the Shulla labors, eats, and lives, to dance. Almost any event may be an occasion for feasting and dancing—a marriage, a death, a hunt, or a victory. Whether it is purely social or semi-religious, the form of celebration is the same and is always accompanied with the drinking of much *marisa*.

The festivities usually begin in the afternoon, and if the weather is fine and there are no mosquitoes, and especially when the nights are gladdened by the splendor of a full moon, the dancing goes on until the next morning. A single day and night is often not sufficient, two or three days and nights witnessing a continued festival.

We always knew when there was such an occasion in the neighborhood, for early in the afternoon young men and maidens in full war-paint were coming and going, and the jingle of bells was heard constantly as dancing groups passed our houses. They were always a merry lot, and frequently stopped to display their outfit and their skill in dancing. Ordinarily the older men and women do not take part.

Personally I have witnessed but one such dance, and that was given at our place—Doleib Hill—and for our special benefit, and was without the *marisa* pot, which to them is indispensible. On that occasion the men of a nearby village had volunteered to come and give us a display of arms, but we were really not prepared for what was to happen. In the first place they came two days earlier than we had expected and then came early in the day, in order to surprise us. And they did surprise us.

The first intimation we had of their coming, or rather of their presence on that particular morning, was a whoop and the sound of a horn that sent a chill, and kept it shooting up and down the spinal column. We rushed out on the veranda, and saw at the foot of our hill, and only a few rods away, that the clans had assembled. There were about one hundred men and boys with their spears and war clubs, their bodies shining with oil, and their spears shining from vigorous rubbing, while their faces were hideous with white and red paint—brick-dust and ashes. They kept leaping in the air, yelling and blowing that soul-sickening horn. Little by little they came toward us, stooping low, hiding behind trees, gliding back and forth until they were in front of the house. Then I stepped out and smiled at them, when sud-

WAR DANCE OF SHULLAS AT DOLIBB HILL

denly with a yell that was not earthly, they sprang in the air, the first line made as if throwing the spear, and suddenly dropped down for the following ranks. Again they all sprang up into the air, yelling, dancing, singing, and brandishing spears, then circled around the house and attacked from another quarter.

These maneuvers were kept up for some time, and they grew more excited and more wild all the while. Then, at a command from their chief, they ceased and began to dance. Dancing with the Shulla means jumping up and down in the same spot, accompanied with a sort of chanting singsong, throwing the arms over their heads and flourishing spears and clubs.

Again they formed in line of battle, five ranks deep, with a front of twenty, each man with spear and shield. The horn sounded the advance and away they charged at the Doctor's house. They seemed to get the very spirit of murder in their faces. They charged in good order; the front rank, striking at an imaginary foe, dropped to their knees to allow the other ranks to strike over their heads, and then the horn sounded the retreat! Around our house they went in a regular stampede, and formed in a line again in front of the house for another charge.

This they repeated a number of times. Then

a crowd of women, who had followed their husbands and sweethearts to battle, acted the part of foe, only to be overcome by the brave warriors and driven back. This part was very amusing. One old body with great bravery marched out and charged, using her pipe as her weapon. The men were a bit rough in driving her back and she was evidently afraid her dear pipe would come to grief, so she took it inside our house and when next we saw her she was in the thick of the fray with a long weed as her weapon of offense and defense.

Then our interpreter, Mohammed, came over and asked that a gun be fired. Dr. McLaughlin brought out a gun. The men were then in line before his house and he came over to where we were all standing in front of our house, and fired into the air. Such a howl and whoop as came from the Shullas cannot be described. Toward us they came as if they meant to pin each of us to the ground with a dozen of spears. It was soon all over. The women and girls danced, catching hands and singing as they danced.

We then had all the men seated and spoke to them. We told them of our country and our people, and why we had been sent to them.

Their chief arose and replied that they now believed us to be their friends. At first they were

suspicious, but not now. If we needed them, they would fight for us. This gave us occasion again to say that we hoped that there would be no more war in the land; that the men should tend their flocks and herds and till the land, and become a happy people.

After singing to them and amusing them, they all went away, each carrying a present of a few beads. We had been amused and entertained, but were weary also from the excitement, and agreed that we did not wish to attend such a function every day. As we sat down and began to meditate, we would look at each other, and kept repeating "And suppose they had met us thus when we first came here?" We thanked God that it was only a sham battle.

A funeral feast has been so well described by the Rev. R. E. Carson that I venture to quote from his article:

"The man in whose honor the feast was to be held had died nearly a year before and this feast corresponded to a formal act of mourning for him. I am told that it may occur in a month, six months, or a year after death, as soon, in fact, as the 'estate' is settled up, *i.e.*, his cows, goats, etc., divided; but my information on this point is vague. In the present instance, the man was a brother of a village sheikh, or village ruler, but not wealthy;

so that the bull slain did not come from the flock of the deceased, but was furnished by his son-in-law, the daughter having recently married a well-to-do man.

"He lived in Pailo, the nearest village to us, which was the scene of the festival and which therefore we might easily visit. His manner of death throws light upon the Shullas' greatest enemy since the slave dealers have ceased to make their desolating raids. He was fishing along the river, wading close to the bank, when a crocodile seized him, and though unable to draw him under, broke and mutilated his leg. The man's friends killed the crocodile, but the man died after lingering a few days. However, there was no touch of sadness or apparent thought of the dead at the feast; all was high, heathen revelry—a war dance followed with the slaying and dividing up of a bull.

"The warriors of three or four villages assembled; we joined the contingent from Mainam (four to five miles from us and where our man Mohammed lives). I cannot pretend to describe the wild scene: the men dressed in every fantastic way they could think of; their hair plastered and done up in various queer forms, sometimes decorated with ostrich feathers or those of other birds, their faces smeared with ashes, bodies greased and decorated with whatever of beads and ornament

they could muster; their loins girt with the most fancy leopard and other skins procurable for the occasion, or with strips of bright colored cloth, red being the favorite.

"When we reached the place we found a couple of bare poles set up in the center of the middle court of the village around which the women were dancing, uttering the shrill joy-cry which closely resembles the wedding cry of Egypt (a 'lu-lu-lu' uttered in the shrillest treble). They, too, were dressed in all the gew-gaws they could muster, and one of them—a daughter of the deceased—carried above her head with her two hands the skin of the crocodile which had killed her father. Apparently it was a trophy of victory over their deadly enemy.

"When the braves reached the village they half encircled it and entered it on the run from the rear, with large shields (made of crocodile or other skins) held by the left hand in front of them and spears brandished in the right. They advanced in battle array, five or six abreast, and took up their position outside of the dancing circle of women and girls.

"Then they, too, made the circuit time and time again, leaping in the air, running forward a few rods, then receding, all the time with shields and weapons held in position, then pretending to hurl

the spear, immediately thereafter crouching down behind the large shields, pretending to await the volley of the enemy; then, leaping up again with wild yells, they would proceed as before.

"Presently the warriors from another village (A-pi-o, across the river from us) entered, got into line and went through the same performances. Later the men from Pailo joined and perhaps from other villages also. I know of no form of manual labor, unless it be wood-chopping or board ripping well prolonged, that would be more wearing, yet they did not seem to tire, but kept it up for hours. We got there before eleven and found they had begun; at twelve I went home and took Mrs. Carson down, and they were still at it at one o'clock when the bull killing took place. However, now and then, a brave would drop out, retire to a convenient *tukl* (hut) to imbibe *marisa*, and return to the dance.

"At length they did seem to weary of the running, shouting and jumping, their ranks dwindled considerably, the *marisa-tukl* grew in popular favor. Then a large horned, fierce-looking bull was led from an enclosure to a doleib palm tree just outside the village. It reared and plunged and rolled its eyes wickedly, indeed, it was said that a special reason for offering it was that it was known as a vicious bull. The two men at the

ropes fastened to its horns led it from the tree, and a Shulla hurled his spear, making an ugly gash in its side, another and another pierced it near to the heart, until the poor brute ran for some one hundred yards and fell, bleeding freely and presenting a revolting spectacle.

"Is there some religious meaning to the ceremony? I think there must be from the fact that it is a bull that is slain. Covered up with heathenish revelry, it is difficult to discover the true significance of the rite, if it has one. Doubtless when I am able to talk to the people freely, I will find out something from them.

"We did not wait for the dividing up of the bull; those of each village received a share which they carried off to be eaten at their own village."

Death, of course, comes to these people as it comes to all living, but it does not seem to oppress them. They do not grieve long for their dead. When death does occur, they bury nearby—possibly in the house or just outside of it—and leveling over the earth, they leave no sign for future remembrance.

The following incident may fittingly close this chapter:

"There was a fire on the opposite side of the river. From the village north of us two men started to cross in a canoe,—they wanted to go

hunting in the path of the fire. There was a very strong wind blowing from the north, and our men said they should not try to cross.

"When in the middle of the stream the boat capsized and both men were thrown out. One got to the shore, the other was drowned. Few of the people know how to swim. Because of crocodiles in the river they have no chance to learn. They said they got the man's body yesterday evening, at any rate the voice of wailing reached us all night. I cannot make out who the man is, although they say he was often here and worked for us. Some of the workmen saw the boat upset, but could not be urged to try to save him. When asked 'Why did not some of you take our boat and try to reach him? You might have saved him.' The answer was 'He did not belong to our village.'

"One of the women in talking to me spoke of death, and when I tried to talk to her she did not understand. Small wonder—she thought I was afraid and said, 'Don't fear, I am the mother and you are the little child; I put my arms around you so'—with this I was embraced—'and that is the way death does.'

"I make no comments; you can draw your own moral. I got mine."

XIV

IMPORTANT VISITORS

Missionary life at Doleib Hill was relieved of much of its loneliness by the frequent visits of the officials and others who happened to come our way. It was not only a pleasant break in a rather monotonous life, but it kept us in touch with the outside world and a civilization that sometimes seemed a long way off. We congratulated ourselves, too, with the thought that the pleasure was mutually shared, that our little compound was a bright spot in the midst of surrounding darkness. Certainly we had attempted to make it so, and were pleased to think that we had not utterly failed. No, not even in its influence over the mind and heart of our savage neighbors.

To us, the visit of the official was like the visit of angels, and, something like angels' visits, were few and far between. There is a great deal of cheer in a cup of tea under such circumstances, and we trust that many an officer did better service because he had been, unawares perhaps, performing the part of an angel.

The visit which I wish to relate and which cheered us for many a day, was something out of

the ordinary. These were no ordinary angels who honored us, and although their coming threw the whole compound into an unusual flutter, we appreciated it. That fourteenth day of January, 1903, was a red-letter day at Doleib Hill. Matthews Bey, Governor of Fashoda, had sent a note saying: "The Lord Cromer and Sirdar party are expected in Taufikiyah, on or about the 14th," and he invited us down for the reception. He hinted that the party might visit the Mission, but as he was evidently rather skeptical on this point we were even more so.

But the rest of the story I will allow Mrs. Giffen's diary to relate:

"*Wednesday evening, January 14th, 1903.* A—h! Imagine that 'Ah' to be a sigh of relief, a very big one and a very long one, for they came, they saw, and—they went away.

"But where shall I begin with my story? As the invitation to meet Lord Cromer at Taufikiyah was for the 14th, we reasoned this way: 'All of the 14th will be taken up in war-paint and war-dance down there. Besides, boats are always a little slow, and slower getting in than they count on. If they come up here, it will not be before the 15th, or at the very earliest the evening of the 14th. Cake for tea will be better fresh. I will bake Wednesday A. M., and we will also put our

houses in order, *company* order, on Wednesday morning.

"When we got up this morning Mr. Giffen, who has been ill in bed for two or three days, thought he would try to ride down to Taufikiyah. In case the boat had not yet come in he would return; but having once gone down he could not be open to the charge of failing to show 'honor to whom honor is due.'

"Getting ready to call on people of rank is always, I think, a trial to Americans, for all their 'all men free and equal' declarations. There is an added trial to it, when your manner of life has been such that your best suit has been lying for a year or more in the very lowest and remotest corner of your deepest trunk, and when starched collars and stiff shirts are like memories of a long past dream, and white neckties seem the ghosts of youthful vanity. But 'we dragged them from the recess where they had remained so long' and after much shaking, and sponging, and pressing, and looking, and talking, we got them into shape and their owner into them, and they looked surprisingly well, notwithstanding the fact that they are now fully two sizes too large for him. But he promised to try and swell out his chest to fill the coat when 'facing the foe,' and if by any chance the foe should get behind him, he would

catch up a handful of cloth in front to make it fit in the back.

"In the meantime the Doctor's donkey was saddled and bridled and ready to go, and the clothes on the man, the man on the red saddle, the saddle on the donkey, the donkey on the public highway —headed for Taufikiyah—and a Shulla 'whip' behind to set the pace. Then, ho! for a day with the nabobs.

"It was ten minutes to nine when the start was made. I went to the kitchen to arrange dinner, etc., then back to make our house of one room into a reception hall. I had just succeeded in putting everything in the room at 'sixes and sevens,' when Mohammed appeared on the scene with: '*Ya sitt!* where is the *Kassis?*' 'Oh, my lady! where is the Parson?' 'He is gone,' I replied. 'There is a steamer coming, what shall we do?' exclaimed Mohammed.

"One moment of blank consternation on my part, then a not very good-natured 'Where is the steamer?' He pointed it out. It was directly to the west of us, but I knew it had to make a run of some distance directly to the north, then to the east and then south past our place. There was just a 'fighting chance,' and then I felt the spirit of 'win-or-die' rise within me. My orders were quick, sharp and decisive. 'Have you a boy

fleet of foot? Call him. Tell the Doctor, and if he thinks best, send the boy after Mr. Giffen and tell him to RUN.' I waited long enough to see a naked black body with flying heels start north, then I began my race with the steamboat.

"Mrs. McLaughlin had not been able for much work for a day or two, but she had had her sweeping done and her carpets cleaned. The M. D. turned housemaid in her interest. I went to her only long enough to ask if her tea-set was where we could get at it, and then with Abbas at my heels I went back to my room.

"Abbas has been much of his life on these boats, so I asked him how long the steamer would take to get here. He replied, 'From half to three-quarters of an hour.' My thought was 'About one chance in a hundred, but that chance must be fought for.'

"To make my story short, by the time I saw through the window the nose of the old steamer coming around the bend about five hundred yards down the river, the room was in good shape, swept clean, carpets cleaned and down, beds made, everything dusted, clean toilet-covers, and other little attempts toward brightening the general effect. The porch also was swept, mat down, easy chairs with pillows in place, clean cover and potted plants on the table.

"Then Abbas was sent to the kitchen with orders to sift four cups of flour, with four teaspoons of baking powder, put on the table bread-board, rolling pin, powdered sugar, eggs, butter, milk, make a fire for heating the oven, fill the tea-kettle with fresh filtered water and make ready the tea tray, then wait for me.

"As yet I had not seen Mr. Giffen coming. I had no time to look. I knew I must get into a clean gown before anyone got to our door. Fortunately the engineers were a little slow coming up to our landing, for which I can say, without being the least undevout, I praised the Lord. At this point in walked Mr. Giffen, a bit flushed, flurried in manner and blown about as to hair and clothes. His greeting was 'How much do you know?' 'Only that the boat is coming,' I replied. 'Yes, it is at the landing.' Then for the first I showed 'the white feather,' saying, 'Oh! I *cannot* get my dress changed.' But Mr. Giffen said in the calmest, most matter-of-fact tone, 'Yes, you can. It takes some time for them to get off, and the Doctor says they are to go to their house first, they are all ready for them.' Then off he went to welcome the people and, as I understood quite well, to detain them a little, if need be, so I could get dressed.

"By the time I saw the lords and ladies shown

into the Doctor's palace I was clad in Damascus silk from top to toe, with a pretty Christmas gift at my neck, and was in the kitchen mixing up cookies. I rolled out and baked three dozen (one stove full) and then threw a cloth over the remainder of the dough to stand until later. I then washed my hands, took off my big gingham apron and went over to see the ladies, to listen and answer questions as if I had a mind at ease, while all the time I was in a dreadful stew lest Abbas should upset the compound.

"The ladies wished tea rather than coffee, for which I was rather glad. They praised the 'buns' (?), and Lady Wingate said she wished she knew how they were made, because the cook on the boat made such uneatable things. Of course it was supposed our cook made them and I offered no explanation. And it *was* the cook, right enough.

"Well, after all my worry and my fuss over not wanting to see them, I have to acknowledge that I enjoyed the visit very much. They were all most kind. They were interested in our work and praised all we had done or tried to do. They admired our Hill and thought our houses wonderful. They were interested in our gardening and took away samples of the different kinds of cotton grown. Our brick were the nicest they had seen

in the Sudan. They were so glad we were trying to dig a well and wished to know at what depth we found water and if it was sweet and good, and what we thought of the people and the climate. What language we expected to teach them, and did we expect to make the work permanent, and scores of other questions.

"When Mr. Giffen said to Lord Cromer, that he had not known whether they would be able to come to see us, he replied, 'Oh, I intended from the first to come to see your place.' We have been honored to-day, entertaining angels unawares. God bless them!

"When they reached the steamer, only 150 feet away, Lady Wingate wrote me a note to say how pleased they were with our work, and wishing us all good. And again I said, 'God bless her!' And they left us saying, 'We hope to visit you next year,' and we all with one accord said, 'Amen!'

"After all was over I asked Mr. Giffen how and where the messenger sent caught him. He said, 'He did not catch me at all. When I was about two-thirds of the way to Taufikiyah I was met by a soldier who gave me a note from Captain Hawker, informing me that the steamer was coming up to our place, and it was after I turned back that I met the boy.' So our boy did not do much

good except as an extra 'whip' on the home journey.

"It must have been a regular 'John Gilpin' race, though he *did* bring home his hat. But the donkey is so rough and Mr. Giffen says he came on the run all the way back, so I am sure that at every whack from the 'whip' there was a jump, and at every jump the rider very politely rose as if for someone else to be seated. It was equal to the ride of our cousin 'Tom' on his old gray mare: Coat tails flying and sticks a-whacking, the old gray mare galloping, but instead of *witches* he had two naked blacks coming on behind.

"As I told you, he was very much blown about when he reached here, and from his own report I know that when his road was near the river he had an uncomfortable feeling that the people on the boat were watching the race, but he did not dare to look long enough to see. He came in just before the boat and thus scored a victory, but says he was so interested in the visit that he forgot to attend to the fit of his coat."

XV

THE UNTAMED—BIRDS, ANIMALS AND CREEPING THINGS

Our secretary writing from Doleib Hill said, "I was disappointed in not finding snakes dangling from the rafters."

Because we have had a few snake stories to relate, some of our friends seem to think snakes are crawling everywhere. I do not think that Secretary Watson, who recently visited us, was *really* disappointed, but if he was, he may be thankful—snakes dangling from the rafters are more disappointing in experience than no snakes at all. Indeed, I think most of us would be willing to leave the serpents out altogether, but snakes have an insinuating way of getting into one's life at unexpected times and in unexpected ways.

Of poisonous snakes there are three kinds, described by the natives thus: "If one of a certain kind bites you, you will probably die. You *may* get well, but you will be very ill and most likely will die. If another kind bites you, you will *surely die*. You may live over night, but you will never get well. If you are bitten by the third kind,

they bury you right where you stand." By this last, of course, they mean that death follows instantly. I have not much doubt that their description is true to their own experience. Without remedies used at once, a bite from any of these would probably be fatal, and even with remedies the chances of recovery might be doubtful. Fortunately for us, no one has been bitten, although we killed many in and around our houses. Of the harmless whipsnakes there were many, but the people never killed these.

There is another kind of snake, of which, or the like of which we had never heard, and for the lack of a better name we called it the "syringe," because it threw a venomous spray from a tube-like tongue, instead of poisoning through fangs. Our first experience with this reptile was rather alarming. Mrs. Giffen has described it as follows:

"But to the cooking of our crane hangs a tale, the very thought of which makes me feel sick. The bird was large, and I needed a platter on which to serve it.

"Now, our cupboard room is somewhat scarce, and such dishes as are not in constant use are packed away in a box in our pantry, said pantry being one end of our kitchen. We had arranged our two cupboards to form the partition between the kitchen and pantry, leaving rather a wide door-

way in the center. Just inside of this doorway, at the back of one of the cupboards, was the box containing the dishes, among them the large meat platter. Because of white ants the boxes must be raised off the floor; for this purpose we use empty fruit cans. The dish box, like all others, was placed on tin cans.

"The box was small, not more than two feet long and one and a half feet wide, and in it, at one end, was a pile of soup plates and dinner plates. At the other end were some tea and dessert plates and some saucers. Altogether they did not fill half the space. Over this empty space was the meat platter turned upside down, thus covering the empty space over the tea plates like a lid. On top of this was a box of onions.

"When dinner was ready I went to get the platter for my bird. I was in very good humor. Dinner and everything and everybody had been behaving well, and I was singing—in spirit at least—the Irishman's opinion of his country, 'Whiles niver once a snake y'll find, Saint Patrick's name be praised!' I lifted the box with the onions in my left hand, bracing the other side of it against my knee, and with my right hand lifted the meat plate.

"As the plate was bottom side up, I had to slip my fingers well under to raise it; as I lifted it out

of the box I don't know whether it was motion or sound that attracted my attention—there being no window in that end of the room it was rather dark—but something made me peer into the empty space which the meat plate had covered, to find it *not* empty, but *full* of snake, and an ugly big head rising up at me.

"I shrieked, 'Kelly!' but he did not hear me. Then, 'Abbas, come quick, a snake!' Abbas was in the kitchen and came on a run, picking up an ax on the way. Abbas is wiser than the rest of us concerning snakes. As soon as he saw what he had to deal with, he caught the head of the creature between the ax and the pile of plates; that is, he meant to catch the head, but in reality caught it about six or eight inches back of the head. Having it thus he could not kill it, but could hold it.

"When I started back—for I had put some yards between me and the snake—Abbas said, 'Keep away and call some of the men.' Just then Dr. McLaughlin, who had heard my excited tones, called across, 'What's up, Mrs. Giffen?' I answered, 'A snake—come quick!' The Doctor came, smiling; knowing my terror of snakes, he did not expect to see much, although I was telling him, 'It is a big one.' Abbas said, 'Bring a club,' but the Doctor, after getting a glimpse, wanted

to see more of it. Abbas said, 'Take care of your face! It will spit!' But the Doctor either did not hear or did not comprehend. The next thing I saw was the M. D. covering his eyes with his hands and heard him say, 'Give me your apron, quick!' I did so, and he wiped his face, then said, 'Give me water, quick!' Leaving Abbas and the snake to manage their own affairs, I began to help the Doctor. In a few minutes Mrs. McLaughlin came and I went back to Abbas.

"There were a number of the Shullas about. I would grab one that had his club and spear in his hand and drag him in to kill the snake. As soon as he would see it he would say, 'Booh!' and out he would go without giving any help.

"By this time, which was not anything like as long as it has taken me to write it, Mr. Giffen heard the noise and came to the rescue and killed the snake. I see in glancing back over what I have written that I have not told you what had happened to the Doctor. The snake had not bitten him, but had thrown venom into his eyes. His face at the time was about two yards from the snake, but it struck him fairly in the eyes,—the Doctor says, 'with the force of a good strong syringe.' The natives said, 'The Doctor's eyes are finished. He will never see again!' And I have little doubt that with one of them it would have been so. But

we did everything we could, and that at once. The eyes were bathed and anointed with sweet cream. This gave but little relief, but a strong solution of soda brought relief. The eyes were very red and sore for a time and the sight blurred and dim, but not permanently injured.

"The snake killed and carried out, and the Doctor's eyes made as comfortable as possible, we turned our attention to dinner again. The scones had been forgotten in the oven and had burned, everything else had gone cold, but we sat down and said never a word about a poor dinner. We were all too anxious about the Doctor's eyes to have much appetite.

"After dinner was over Mr. Giffen examined the reptile. It was five feet long and eight inches in circumference in the thickest place, and tapered but little. He could find no fangs at all, but where the point of the tongue should have been there was a small tube-like arrangement, about three-quarters of an inch in length, and as thick as an ordinary lead pencil. At the end of this was an opening. From this, no doubt, it throws the venom. While killing it, Mr. Giffen saw it throw the venom. To do this it swelled out its neck until it was as broad as his hand.

"After this the snake was thrown away, and I gathered up the fragments of the broken dishes.

Outwardly the world looked as usual, but for several days every bit of stick, string, or rope I saw was magnified into a snake."

There were other experiences, lots of them, too, but perhaps not all quite so exciting as this one.

An experience with a snake is exciting enough, even though he crawls off and leaves one alone. While digging up earth for brick, we came upon a nest of viper's eggs. They were about five feet below the surface. The eggs were in shape, size, and color like small hen's eggs. The eggs were crushed, as this seemed to us the most excellent method of destroying reptiles.

Of lizards, there was a fine assortment. They were green, blue, brown, black, mottled, and striped; short tailed and long tailed; smooth skin and warty. Indeed, the lizards were always and everywhere present, crawling over the walls, the rafters and the floor; they helped to destroy flies and other insects.

Bats we had in abundance, and just as loathsome and disgusting as bats always are. Our crickets were the loudest singers ever heard. They were very numerous and mischievous. On one occasion they destroyed a lot of cabbage in one night. Our Katy-did—or what seemed to us most like 'Katy,'—said, "Katy-did-sh-sh-she-did!" but this stammer only proves them true Shullas.

The frogs are numerous and a noisy lot at any time, day or night, but especially at night. There are little ones that sing, "Knee-deep—knee-deep," and the big ones that sing bass as frogs should. Then there is a peculiarly clanking sound like the distant striking of an anvil with a hammer, a mile or two away. Anytime, day or night, that you stop to listen, the hum and buzz of thousands of unseen insects can be heard.

In daylight the air seems bright with butterflies; little ones and big ones, yellow, blue, white, black, spotted, and with all colors and sheens imaginable combined. At times the air is full of dragon flies, and these too, of various colors and most delicate wings. Even the moths that gather around the candle at night are of brilliant coloring; not that we do not have the common miller with his dusty coat as well.

There are many birds, too, but not many songsters, although some do sing. The prettiest of them all is a small blue bird, little larger than a humming bird. Its body is a soft, pale blue, like the softest and finest of velvet, and its head, wings and tail a pretty Quaker gray. They are tame, and usually go about in pairs and will come up to the very door for crumbs. They have a cheery, chatty, little chirp, but, I think, never sing. There is also a yellow bird, with greeny-brown feathers,

giving them the appearance of a dark-colored canary. We were not able to decide whether they sing or not.

The sauciest and the most amusing is the starling. If out walking, they follow after you scolding all the time. They come about the door; flocks of them are to be seen everywhere. They are great friends of sheep and cattle. If a flock is passing, almost every animal will have one or two and as many as three of these birds mounted on its back picking diligently at the ticks, flies, and bugs that annoy the sheep greatly. The flocks seem to enjoy having their backs scratched, and recognize the "blackies" as their friends. They are glossy and black as jet; the female is wholly black, but the male has a bright scarlet bill. Although only a little larger than our American blackbird, owls, hawks, and crows all have a wholesome respect for them. It is amusing to see a great, blind owl clinging to the doleib branches and five or six of the "blackies" giving him a well deserved thrashing for nest-robbing. The hawks and the crows have to be dealt with on the wing; they will not sit still to be whipped.

The Sudan crows are of two or three kinds. One is "black as crows should be." Another has black head and wings, and white around the neck and body. Another is smaller, and jet black, with

a neat little tuft of feathers on its head. All speak the crow language.

Of the larger birds there is no end. The guinea-fowl come about in great flocks and roost in the trees by the house, and with the ducks and geese, they are occasionally brought in to supply meat for the table. Beside these, there are stork, crane, pelican, flamingo, fish-hawks, heron, and many others; we never tire watching them. Dr. McLaughlin shot a stork that measured 9 feet from tip to tip of wing; it was 4 feet high, and its bill was 16 inches long.

Birds and butterflies are not the only wild creatures. There are others less desirable to have around. While sleeping under the trees before our houses were made ready we several times thought we heard a cat at night; but were told that there were no cats about. One morning, however, we found a little wildcat kitten beside the bed. It had fallen from the doleib tree not ten feet away, where, hidden in the branches, the mother had a nest. This kitten had fallen out and was killed.

The wildcats and the hyenas were the only wild animals that gave us any trouble; these frequently helping themselves to our chickens and milk. We were told that there were leopards on the hill, and that a year before one had attacked a

man, tearing his head and face badly. They had succeeded in killing the beast "but his widow still lived around in the fields."

The people were surprised that our cattle and sheep, unprotected, were never molested, while theirs, watched over, night and day, were often attacked, and they wanted an explanation. Our interpreter—Mohammed—told them that it was because "our God protected us." This not only seemed to satisfy, but greatly impressed them.

The beautiful gazelle came down to drink at the river and were often seen, but the Shullas hunted and frightened them away with their dogs.

Plenty other and larger game existed, but was a little more shy of human abode, and did not come near. Across the river, where the grass was less used for pasture, and hiding more easy, hunting was worth while and good sport to the sportsman. There were antelope, gemsbok, waterbok, wart-hogs, buffalo, even lions and elephants. The latter seldom came down to the river, only when the inland pools were dried up and they were pressed for drink, but lions remained all the year in the swamp near the junction of the two rivers. We generally confined our sport, however, to the smaller game.

There is a beauty in these wild creatures that roam over the uncultivated plains that the same

beasts, tamed or caged for man to look at, do not possess. The elephant chained by the foot looks like a criminal, while the monster in his native clime, half buried in tall waving grass, is a king. The wide, grassy plain belongs to him and he belongs to the plain. The same is true of all the others. Many of them are harmless creatures, as are all the gazelle and antelope tribe. To shoot them when not required for food seems little short of murder.

Ordinances for the preservation of wild animals and birds in the Sudan have been promulgated. This will appeal to any wise and humane person, as having a civilizing influence, where the "whole creation groaneth, waiting to be delivered." The Sudan is a rich field for the naturalist; there are many species of the animal kingdom of which but little is known. These are all God's creatures, and the harmless ones, at least, have been placed here for some other purpose than to be shot at. As civilization advances, as it will inevitably, the wild animals as they now exist will disappear; but in the meantime it becomes every sportsman, whether visitor, official, or resident, to observe carefully the laws for the preservation of these beautiful wild animals.

XVI

DOLEIB HILL AND THE SOBAT RIVER

I WISH it were possible to describe Doleib Hill, the river and the surrounding country, so that every reader might realize what it really is. I cannot hope to do this with entire satisfaction, but with the help of Mrs. Giffen's diary, and the reader's imagination, a fairly clear and accurate picture may be drawn.

The estimate of beauty of our site and of the river, as of all places and rivers, depends very largely upon the individual. When we first landed and began to make of Doleib Hill a home, to some of our party at least it was very much like "a root out of dry ground," and there was "no beauty in it." Little by little, however, as we began to bring to it the comforts of home life, and associate with it the ideas of home, the whole situation became changed and transformed. No doubt the very trials and hardships helped to produce a radical change in our attitude toward the place.

The hill or knoll, or rather that side of it which faces the river, is covered with a grove of beauti-

J. KELLY GIFFEN AND MRS. GIFFEN AT DOLEIB HILL

ful palms. These palms, very tall and topped with a foliage of huge, round leaves, beautify our grounds, afford shelter from the sun, and mark the situation from afar. To the back of the hill is a grass covered plain stretching many miles toward the east. In front is the beautiful river, and beyond that another plain. Villages of the native people are about twenty minutes' walk to the north and south of us, for in the Sudan we measure distance by the clock. There are no great forests or magnificent mountains to lend variety to the scenery. I presume most people would think life at Doleib Hill monotonous—the cloud and sky; rain and sunshine; stormy winds and balmy breezes; great grass-covered plains and herds of cattle, and black, naked people. Yes, there is certainly some monotony in our surroundings, but, after all, is that not true everywhere? The noise and bustle of city life soon becomes monotonous to me, and even travel soon loses much of its charm, unless there is purpose in it all. Life at Doleib Hill was to us tolerable because of our purpose there, and the beauty of our place and the comforts of life were in proportion to the philosophy we brought to bear upon our existence, and because of the fact that it was home, and that duty kept us, and peace and love shared our rude dwelling.

Just how we looked upon our life may be illustrated in some notes from the oft-quoted diary.

"Do you get tired of our writing about Doleib Hill? Just come yourself and see how nice it is. When I was at home in '91, Miss —— said to me: 'You tell the wrong things; don't tell about your good times, tell of your hardships, you will get more sympathy.' Now, even at the risk of making the mistake again, I must say that I will never again feel the same heartaching compassion for missionaries in a new field that I have felt in the past. Are there trials? Yes. And some hardships? Yes. Some self-sacrifice? Yes. And some lonesomeness? Yes. But as I place side by side the trials of the past year, and the work and worry and heartache of the first few years of our missionary life in Egypt, I say, without the least hesitation, 'Here is comparative rest.' There now! If I have said the wrong thing, forget it.

"During the twenty years of our missionary life in Egypt we, like all the rest in Egypt, worked hard and tried to do our duty, and in addition to the burden of work we carried a load of worry and anxiety that was more trying than the work itself. This worry we do not have here yet. To be sure, we are often perplexed, and very often are in doubt as to what should be done and what left un-

done; but when night comes we go to bed to sleep and not to lie with eyes wide open staring into the darkness, and with brain throbbing, trying to work out some problem of method, or scheming for the accomplishment of some work or staring at some great catastrophe that has befallen the work.

"I should say perhaps, for the protection of someone of a different temperament—someone who might be sent here—that I do not suffer so much from loneliness as some do. I miss my children and friends more than I can tell; but the fact that there are no people of our own kin here, no society,—the quietness of the place,—does not trouble me in the least. I like a pretty home, but it is some amusement to try to make this one pretty. Someone has remarked that Mrs. McLaughlin and I can lay claim to being the best dressed women within 500 miles in every direction. In like manner we can claim to have the homiest homes within the same distance; and but few of you can lay claim to so great distinction."

Here is just one little instance which is a sidelight on everyday life at Doleib Hill:

"Other than the killing of the crocodile, we had two bits of excitement yesterday. One was a fight between our man Mohammed and a man from one of the villages, over the price of a bundle of

corn-stalks that was to be used in our new fence. The other was a lost child.

"A man from a village south of us came last night, after dark, searching for the boy. He said he was *talk* (absent or lost) and that he had been at our place during the day. I was anxious lest someone should start the report that we had taken the child. The people are allowing the small boys and girls to come around us so much more than they would at first, and we are pleased because of this confidence, and hope nothing will occur to lessen it.

"The fight between Mohammed and the man was 'nipped in the bud' by Mr. Giffen's interference. The first I knew of it, I saw Abbas running out in great excitement—boy-like, he dearly loves to see a fight—then I heard loud talk, and got to the window in time to see Mr. Giffen take the villager by the shoulder and start him down the hill at a quicker step than these people usually attain to, and heard him tell Mohammed to keep quiet, in a tone that showed he meant it. I supposed that was the end of the affair; but the man came around our house and got in from the other side to have his fight out with Mohammed. Mr. Giffen went after him again and sent him off home. I am sure none of the people would intentionally hurt either Mr. Giffen or the Doctor, but when they are angry,

and spears are flashing, and clubs are swinging as they dance around, and our men run in among them, I always feel like shutting my eyes and exclaiming: 'Lord, protect them!'

"This man as he went by our house the second time on his way home was very amusing. He was talking at the top of his voice and flourishing his spear. Mr. Giffen kept close up to him and would aid him occasionally with a vigorous shove. The man would walk about two yards and then sit flat on the ground and strike the earth with the sharp end of his club, sinking it four or five inches into the ground. At command to move on, he would go a few feet farther and again throw himself on the ground. He was mad! I could not understand what he was saying, but it sounded profane. They are such children in everything."

Another phase of daily life is set forth in the following note:

"Now that our storms are over, it seemed wise to have the outside of our house treated to a coat of mud. This would correspond to a coat of paint or whitewash. The women apply this with their hands. The rain had washed little gullies in the walls and they looked very much pockmarked.

"When this was done, 'twas the old story of the new parlor carpet, *i. e.*, the box-room must needs be done to correspond. Then the inside of the

storeroom was in bad shape, for white ants had built their covered roadways all over its walls, and an old hen with her little chickens had been imprisoned for a time, and had been most industrious scratching up the floor. So it seemed really necessary to do that room. Then the mud floor of the porch looked so shabby beside the smooth walls of the house and the storeroom that it was treated to mud plaster too. This being done, there only remained of all the house the walls of our bedroom and they really needed smoothing, so we turned out all our belongings and handed the place over to the old woman and her mud-bucket. It is not whitewash, but blackwash. It is not put on with a brush, but with the hands; but so far as splashing the surroundings, only an Egyptian whitewasher can excel them. Painting with mud does not sweeten things up like a lime wash, but it is no small satisfaction to have the walls made smooth and of one color, which they were not before.

"Mr. Giffen and I were talking of our leaving here for our furlough, and I, at least, was surprised at the heartache which came with the thought that we must leave. The black walls of our house mean home to us now; and the black faces of the people are the faces of friends; and we feel that we have been able to do so little of the

great work that needs to be done for them. It is not that we have been careless or negligent, but as you know work always seems slow at the beginning. Ah, well. If we are to come back here we will be able to do more. If not, then someone else will do it, better perhaps than we."

As has been hinted we were not always jolly, and yet we are not long sad. Sickness came to us among other trials, and there were weary days of waiting and watching, not knowing what the issue would be. On the whole we were happy and always very busy.

As a further illustration of our life at Doleib Hill, Mrs. Giffen wrote while recovering from a terrible fever:

"It has been so pleasant, that sometimes while here in bed I could close my eyes and imagine myself at our Mission Summer Station at Ramleh on the Mediterranean. The wind in these funny old dolcibs makes a noise that one can easily imagine to be the waves on the seashore. At first the wind in the new green branches sounds like the waves when they cross the first breakers far out. Then the lower branches catch the wind, making a deeper note, which is the wave drawing nearer the shore. And at last, the dry, dead branches swing out with a hissing, boiling sound, then swing in again against the trunk of the tree with a thud which

completes the breaking of the waves on the shore. The gust of wind, passing on, leaves behind it a 'sighing and a-sobbing' not at all unlike the receding of the water.

"One nice thing about our place here, too, is that we can see for miles in every direction. Of course there are drawbacks. This dreadful malaria, the long distance from friends and white men of any sort, friends or foes; and our post comes only once in two weeks. We count among our blessings the passing of a steamer even though it does not stop. It seems to keep us in touch with the outside world.

"Behold! just then from under my bed wiggled a fine, blue-black snake. I was sitting so close to the edge of the bed that I saw it with one corner of my eye. What did I do? I drew myself up into as small space as possible and shouted. Mr. Giffen came with a stick and the Doctor with a garden-rake and the snake was killed, but it left my hands shaky. We cannot think where it came from. They all laughed at me when I said it came from out of my slippers, but they were the only things under the bed for it to hide in. I do not consider snakes among our appreciated blessings nor among the beauties of the place.

"From my bed I can watch the boys who tend the cattle and sheep across the river, getting them

started for home as a big storm is threatening. While the sun shines and the weather is good, they like to keep their charges together for gossip's sake; but when a big storm cloud appears it is interesting to see how quickly the cattle of each village are mustered out by themselves and started home on a trot.

"There came a report to us that at a village four or five miles up the river lions have been taking the sheep. The men formed for a hunt and succeeded in killing the lioness, but the lion, after killing a man, escaped. Yes, it makes me feel a little as if I would like a good, strong door on the house and some windows. But we tell ourselves—or rather the men folk tell us—'there is no danger here; that was across the river, there is no timber on this side for the wild beasts to hide in.'

"I have wondered—when I would think about it—at the cool way in which we go to bed here night after night, with no means of protection whatever, when we know the Shulla will not part with his spear night or day.

"Our house and the McLaughlin house are about 100 feet apart; the other buildings are at a greater distance. Dr. and Mrs. McLaughlin sleep in their house, we in ours, Abbas in our kitchen, and Mohammed in our storeroom. Abbas has no door to his building; the storeroom has a wooden door;

our room has a screen door with no fastening, and the Doctor's house has mats for doors. We have no watchman of any sort. All go to bed, and even Jok, the dog, tries to find a place where the mosquitoes will not devour him, and he too goes to sleep. There are two guns, one in each house; one is useless, but the other is deadly enough when it hits. And so we sleep. For myself I may say when I hear some unusual sound at night it startles me a bit. I listen to hear it again to determine what it is. If I can, it is all right; if I cannot, I reach over and touch Mr. Giffen,—who is usually sleeping peacefully—and I call to mind the saying, 'If I am born to be hanged I will never be drowned,' or to put it more devoutly, 'that we are in God's care, and that wild beasts and vipers are under His control,—then I turn over and go to sleep as easily as I could in Tanta, Egypt.' . . .

"*November 18*, —. The rains are certainly over now, though at times still, there are clouds. The grass is all turning yellow and dry. But the Sobat is still rising, an indication that the rains are not yet over in the hills of Abyssinia. It is said we have a very big river. Every day has its beauties and the river is full of interest. There is so much float going down; sometimes pieces large enough for us to call them islands, and

on the float are birds and frogs in abundance. There is no lack of music if one stands on the river bank at sunset, and listens to the frogs as the float drifts by. It is a case of 'the big drum, the little drum, pianoforte and piccolo; the bass drum, the tenor drum, the fiddle and the fife.' When there is a lull in the music, some big fellow calls out a good-by; and we say, '*sellam* on (give our love to) our people in Egypt.'

"There is a white bird here that looks much like the ibis of Egypt; these travel down on the float by hundreds. If anything disturbs or frightens them, they fly to the nearest tree and settle. The tree is suddenly transformed, and from a distance looks as if covered with great white blossoms. On one piece of float we counted more than fifty of these birds. I do not think they are fishers, though they may be. In the early morning, before the sun shows his face, but while the eastern sky is aglow with blushes because he is coming, these white birds come back on the wing. To stand on our hill and look toward the east and see great flocks of these birds pass between you and the glow of the sunrise is beautiful beyond description. One feels like saying, 'Oh, that I had wings like a white bird.' David must have watched the birds in the early morning.

"Very large birds also sail down on the float;

but they go singly or in pairs, and usually on the small pieces of float. They are not on a pleasure trip, but are attending strictly to business. They are fishers by trade, and I judge very successful ones.

"There is another large bird worthy of note, because at a little distance it resembles a swan. These are, however, pelicans. Some of them gray and some white; they all swim upon the surface of the water, but are never found on the pieces of float. When disturbed, they, too, rise from the water and fly, but only a short distance and then settle again on the bosom of the river. They are better swimmers than flyers. This morning I counted eighteen in one group, swimming along in line, one behind the other; they seemed to be playing 'follow the leader.' But we have birds, and birds and birds, I could not tell of all.

"About once a month we took an outing of some kind; it did not matter much what it was or where we went, so we got away from the ordinary scenes and duties. Generally we would go hunting or picnicking, or combine the two, and these were delightful occasions; for the sake of the description of the country and conditions I will refer to one of them:

"Last night we agreed on a five-and-a-half start; but it was six-and-a-half when we pulled

out from the shore. Our party consisted of the Rev. Mr. Gwynne (our guest), we four missionaries and six Shullas. Mohammed was also to be one of the party, but he asked the privilege of walking across to his village and joining us later.

"I wish it were possible to give you a pen picture of the river in the early morning. The reflection from the sky was lovely. The tall grass on either bank, sprinkled through with still taller white flowers, which I call hollyhocks, though I am told they are a wild hemp—be their name hollyhock or hemp, they are beautiful. The flowers, shaped much like the hollyhock, are ivory white in color with a center of deep maroon, and, on their long stems which lift their heads above the grass, they seem to be bowing and smiling at you as you pass.

"The songs of the birds and the flutter of their wings as they flew by, seemingly wanting to know our business in their domain; and the call of the larger birds when disturbed by the men on shore, and flocks of them flying in long lines or circling overhead, were a constant source of delight.

"The water of the river was as smooth as oil, with great and small plots of float drifting down; the small pieces often with some huge water-bird sitting perfectly still watching for a fish to show itself that he might have a breakfast; and the

r-r-r-rattle of the frog songs were on the float, and banks, and everywhere. The air and sky and water were full of music and sunshine and color.

"The east bank of the river is low, but at some places on the west bank it is high and steep. Here the long vines draped the edge and floated out upon the water. Here too, bushes grew not only on the top of the bank, but often out of the sides, and on these hung dozens—yes, hundreds—of bird's nests. The nests were woven of grass, and hanging from the outer end of the little tender branches, like so many cones. At one side, near the top, was the little opening, which was well protected from intrusion. I did not see the bird, and supposed it was a water-bird of some sort, but I am told the nests are seen also away back from the river and in the timber, but always suspended like this for protection from snakes, rats and other enemies.

"We have been describing things as seen from the boat. Much depends on the point of view. The men on shore, towing the boat, saw little of the beauty that filled us with joy that morning. To them it was all *ro-ij* (bad). The tall grass and flowers pulled and scratched their naked bodies, and the float made pulling hard. The vines tripped their feet; the bushes were full of thorns that tore the flesh and caught the rope.

To them the birds were nice when you could eat their flesh or needed their feathers for adornment. But the sky, the water, and the air were as they always had been, and the sun was hot. 'Booh!'

"And really the men did have a hard time, though chiefly through their own awkwardness. Mohammed came presently to meet us. He had walked across the land at the great bend in the river and, with another native, floated down to meet us in one of the native 'dug-out' canoes. They were such a help to us in getting past the overhanging bush and vines. When the ropes caught, we on the boat would catch the branches and hold our boat from drifting back. Then the rope was thrown to Mohammed who would carry it around the obstruction and pass it back to the men on shore. Then we would release our hold and move on to the next obstacle. To be sure this was not rapid traveling, but we were in no great hurry, and, besides, it does no good to get in a rush in Shulla Land, unless it is something you can do for yourself and ask no help from the people.

"Finally we came to the place we had set out for. It was almost noon when Mohammed in his little canoe shot forward saying, 'The *khor* is just here.' A *khor* is an inlet. We lost sight of him as he shot his light canoe into the tall grass that effectually closed behind him. I am sure none

of us in the boat noticed the opening even when we were beside it. It looked just the same as scores of other places along the shore. But Mohammed called out, 'Turn in!' and our big boat crushed through the harsh swamp grass into the *khor*. We could not go far for the water was shallow, and the men carried us and placed our feet on dry land, in a path that led up from the hidden harbor.

"This grassy, reedy *khor* needed only a few forest trees to fit some of the descriptions of the Leather Stocking Tales. Even without the trees, it called these stories to mind. It would have been a fine place to hide a canoe and then just happen on it again when fleeing from Indians bent on killing you.

"After leaving the boat we walked inland for perhaps an eighth of a mile to a little knoll where were some trees and some huts. Here we rested for some time and then spread our cloth,—the grass being short on the knoll—unpacked our hamper and had our dinner. You would not believe how good it tasted. Here is the bill of fare: Home-made bread, home-made cheese, orange marmalade, quince jelly (from Egypt), a tin of Armour's roast beef, some tins of English potted meats, a lot of beautiful home-grown tomatoes, three big bottles of coffee and three others of

sweet morning's milk, and a three gallon jar of boiled water. The tomatoes we ate with our bread and meat, and called it salad; later on when we ate more of the same sort, we called it fruit for dessert. It is a good thing to imagine one's self a child again, and bring into play the same imagination that helped us get so much enjoyment out of housekeeping with broken dishes and improvised courses, making ourselves think it was fine china and that we were very great ladies indeed and entertaining our friends.

"The place was not a village for men, but a stable for cattle only. The cattle belong to the people living on the other side of the river. There were four or five huts for the men who care for them.

"Dinner over, the gentlemen went off to examine the wood and look for game, while Mrs. McLaughlin and I clung to the scant shade made by a doleib tree, she trying to sleep and I to write. Neither of us succeeded very well in our undertaking, nor the gentlemen in theirs, for they returned without game other than one poor, wee pigeon. And the timber? Well, there was nothing suitable for building purposes. I must say that the timber in this part of Africa has been most disappointing. There have been some trees cut away for fuel for steamers and other purposes; but in

no place are the trees large. All—or nearly all—are a variety of the acacia. They do not grow very close together, nor is there the thick undergrowth that the pictures in our old geographies led me to expect. You know the sort I mean—those large trees covered with vines, and monkeys making a bridge on which to cross over rivers, with an immense snake hanging from at least one of the trees.

"Now I do not know that there are no such scenes in some parts of Africa, but I do say they are not in this part. I have sometimes heard officials and others talk about 'timber,' but in Ohio we would call it *brush*, or where the trees grew close together we might call it a *thicket*. Indeed it looks a good deal like a wild plum thicket. Just around where we ate our lunch the trees reminded us of an old apple orchard where about one-half of the trees had died away, or some olive orchards I have seen in Italy. But the grass is in no way disappointing. It grows tall and rank everywhere.

"When we started for home Mrs. McLaughlin and I were behind all the others—not much, but we loitered—and then, where the path divided, we took the wrong one. The men knew by our voices that we were on the wrong road and shouted for us. We were in no danger whatever, but it

can be seen how easily one might become lost if out alone. Wild creatures, too, can hide in this tall grass not ten feet from you, and you never suspect it. A little later on the rains will cease, the fires will take the tall grass, and the ponds that are in the low places will dry up; then the wild animals will come over the uncovered ground to get to the river for water. Then comes the hunter's opportunity.

"We got back to the boat in due time and started home. The Shullas seemed to enjoy the return trip. We floated with the current, and I am sure we all were surprised that it took so short a time. The Shullas sang for us. Their tunes, though rather monotonous, were pretty, but more chants than songs. In their music there is a wildness and a plaintiveness that makes one feel sad, a sort of homesick sadness. If your imagination be strong, you can hear in the music the twang of bowstrings and the clash of spears, as well as the thud of spear or club against a shield. Now, of course, people of strong common sense won't hear such nonsense, but some others, who like to shut their eyes and see visions and dream dreams, can hear it all very distinctly. At last we reach home, much helped by the day's outing, though weary and with hands and faces blistered.

"Still the day is not done. There is one thing

more—the sunset. Talk about pretty sunsets in Egypt, or in the desert; I never saw them until I came here. And just now we are having an afterglow that surpasses any sunset. About a half hour after the sun disappears the sky is wondrously beautiful. In the west it is not a pink, nor a gold, nor a lavender, nor yet a blue, neither is it a salmon; yet it is a blending of all these into a perfect glory of color which, in the exact west, is at its brightest. Here too it flames upward to the zenith and from this point it spreads in either direction, growing narrower and fainter till, in the east, it is like a dream or a memory of the glow in the west.

"How I wish I could show it to you! The horizon a deep purple with this lovely light above, the new moon like a silver horn hanging in the midst; the river to the south of us bright with the reflection; to the north growing darker and narrower until it is but a ribbon of dark grey; the grass near the river looking like green in the moonlight, but back, to the east, it looks like fields of ripe grain, ready for the harvest. See it all, through and under and over and beside these dear old doleibs, and you could never forget it. Even the doleibs, that scold and gossip, and at times seem to use bad language, are under the influence of the glow and glory of light, and are

whispering secrets or making love, I do not know which.

"Mr. Giffen read to me the other day of some great body (I don't know who) who wore a dress 'the color of a tropical sky at night.' It seemed extravagant speech then; but we should be told at what time of night it was and given some other particulars, before this description can mean anything. It will be said I am moonstruck. But come and see it and you too will be moonstruck.

"The sunsets in Egypt are fine, but the sunsets on the Sobat are glorious, and with an ever increasing power over the beholder. I hope you won't send me home in a 'strait-jacket' as a 'luny.' If you do, the three others must go too, for they are as far 'gone' as I am, the only difference being that they still have sense enough not to give themselves away."

These few lines which now follow tell what Doleib Hill was to us. Better than confessions and protestations, they show how we loved the place. It had come time for us to leave, for at least a year's furlough to America, possibly for much longer. Others had come to take our places, and as we were waiting for our steamer Mrs. Giffen wrote:

"Here I sit in the house that was ours, but which is to be ours no longer, and, spread about

here and there and all over the room, are our earthly belongings—the big bag, the little bag, the brown bag, the telescope, the bandbox and the lunch box, the shawl strap and the basket—with all their sisters and cousins of a larger growth on the veranda outside. The boat was to have been here by eight o'clock this morning, but there is no sign of it yet, and 8 A. M. is long past. I find this watching 'for our ship to come in' a rather sad wait. I keep telling myself that 'it has been hard work here,' and 'it is far away from our friends,' and everything else that I can think of that is not pleasant; and I insist with my other self that I want to leave. But after going over the whole ground many times, I have had to confess that I am sorry to leave Doleib Hill and all these shiny black faces that have grown so very familiar to me, and, were it not for two dear, white faces across the big water and the fact that we both need the change, I would say, 'Kelly, don't let's.'

"Since the Carsons came to take our place, the days have slipped away and have been all too short. In the evenings we have sat out in the open space between our houses, discussing plans, and talking over so many things. . . .

"I think I never saw the full beauty of Doleib Hill until I watched it from the steamer as we

slipped away and the distance grew and grew between us. As we caught the last glimpse Mr. Giffen said: 'Peace be unto Doleib Hill. For the sake of the house of Jehovah our God, I will seek thy good.' And we both felt that another chapter of our life was ended. What next?"

XVII

THE SUDAN LAND

In a country like the Sudan, where the natural resources are entirely undeveloped, the successful operation of missionary enterprises largely depends upon the possibilities of the country. On this point there have been and still are extreme views; chiefly due to the view-point of those expressing an opinion.

The Sudan is so wide in extent and so varied in conditions, that it is not surprising that we meet with opposing views. In the north there is the wide expanse of desert that produces little or nothing. Near the river there is a narrow strip redeemed from the great waste by the life-giving water. Rain seldom falls, and never in any quantity sufficient to produce more than a scant growth of grass in the lowest places and a few groups of thorny and almost worthless mimosa.

Anyone having experience with this desert country and forming an opinion from that alone, would be justified in calling the Sudan by all sorts of ugly names.

Then there is the other extreme, and on the map

it does not seem far from one to the other. There are vast regions where the rainfall is very great. The rivers overflow their banks; great lakes and swamps are the result. Malaria and fever seem to the weary sojourner to be the only product. Some can only see the wilderness growth of grass and bush, hear the bellowing of the hippo, and the ferocious buzz of the mosquito. It is a sad story many have to relate of the regions coming within the rain circle. Both of these views are pessimistic, and they are equally unjust and misleading.

Here is an example of the one taken from no less an authority than Mr. G. W. Steevens, in his "With Kitchener to Khartum."

"The vindication of our self-respect was the great treasure we won at Khartum, and it was worth the price we paid for it. Most people will hardly persuade themselves there is not something else thrown in. The trade of the Sudan? For now and for many years you may leave that out of the account. The Sudan is a desert, and a depopulated desert. Northward of Khartum it is a wilderness; southward it is a devastation. It was always a poor country, and it always must be. Slaves and ivory were its wealth in the old time, but now ivory is all but exterminated, and slaves must be sold no more. Gum arabic and ostrich feathers and Dongola dates will hardly buy cotton

stuffs enough for Lancashire to feel the difference.

"From Halfa to above Berber, where rain never falls, the Nile only licks the lip of the desert. The father of Egypt is the stepfather of the Sudan. With the help of water-wheels and water-hoists a few patches of corn and fodder can be grown, enough for a dotted population on the bank. But hardly anywhere does the area of vegetation push out more than a mile from the stream; oftener it is a matter of yards. Such a country can never be rich. But why not irrigate? Simply because every pint of water you take out of the Nile for the Sudan means a pint less for Egypt. And it so happens that at this very moment the new barrages at Assuan and Assiut are making the distribution of water to Egypt more precise and scientific than ever. Lower Egypt is to be enlarged; Upper Egypt is, in part at least, to secure permanent irrigation, independent of the Nile flood, and therewith two crops a year. This means a more rigid economy of water than ever, and who will give a thought to the lean Sudan? What it can dip up in buckets fat Egypt will never miss, and that it may take—no more.

"As for the southward lands, they get rain, to be sure, and so far they are cultivable; only there

is nobody left to cultivate them. For three years now the Egyptian army has been marching past broken mud hovels by the river-side. Dust has blown over their foundations, Dead Sea fruit grows rank within their walls. Sometimes, as in old Berber, you come on a city with streets and shops—quite ruined and empty. Here lived the Sudanese whom the Khalifa has killed out. And in the more fertile parts of the Sudan it is the same. Worse still—in that the very fertility woke up the cupidity of the Baggara, and the owner was driven out, sold in the slave-market, shipped up Nile to die of Fashoda fever, cut to pieces, crucified, impaled—anything you like, so long as the Khalifa's fellow-tribesmen got his land. In Kordofan, even of old days, lions in bad years would attack villages in bands; to-day they openly dispute the mastery of creation with men. From Abyssinia to Wadai swelters the miserable Sudan—beggarly, empty, weed-grown, rank with blood.

"The poor Sudan! The wretched, dry Sudan! Count up all the gains you will, yet what a hideous irony it remains, this fight of half a generation for such an emptiness. People talk of the Sudan as the East; it is not the East. The East has age and color; the Sudan has no color and no age—just a monotone of squalid barbarism. It

is not a country, it has nothing that makes a country. Some brutish institutions it has, and some bloodthirsty chivalry. But it is not a country: it has neither nationality, nor history, nor arts, nor even natural features. Just the Nile—the niggard Nile refusing himself to the desert—and for the rest there is absolutely nothing to look at in the Sudan. Nothing grows green. Only yellow *halfa-grass* to make you stumble, and sapless mimosa to tear your eyes; doom-palms that mock with wooden fruit, and Sodom apples that lure with flatulent poison. For beasts it has tarantulas and scorpions and serpents, devouring white ants, and every kind of loathsome bug that flies or crawls. Its people are naked and dirty, ignorant and besotted. It is a quarter of a continent of sheer squalor. Overhead the pitiless furnace of the sun, under foot the never ceasing treadmill of the sand, dust in the throat, tuneless singing in the ears, searing flame in the eye,—the Sudan is a God-accursed wilderness, an empty limbo of torment for ever and ever."

It is impossible not to admire Mr. Steevens's power of description, and one covets his use of language. There is truth in all that he has written, and had Mr. Steevens confined his description to the desert region of the Sudan there could be

no controversy. But to the ordinary reader the foregoing would convey the impression that all the Sudan was a fiery desert waste, fit for neither man nor beast, and divinely intended to swallow up the inhabitants thereof. Unfortunately, nearly all we have ever read or heard of the Sudan is of this exaggerated misleading nature. It is not surprising therefore that a general impression should exist that the whole country is as Mr. Steevens has described it.

Even General Gordon, who knew it as but few white men ever knew it, gave expression to similar opinion. But Gordon was in a measure, at least, excusable, shut up as he was in a beleaguered city, and forsaken by his friends. Mr. Steevens also may be excused on the ground that all he had seen of the Sudan, through weary months of marching and fighting, has been as he has so graphically depicted it.

Fortunately, the Sudan is not all desert. There are mighty rivers, with great fertile valleys and vast productive plains. After all, the desert portions are a small part of that great country. From Wadi Halfa to Khartum is nearly 600 miles of barren sand. Here the Anglo-Egyptian army had to do their weary marching, on foot or on camels, and it took them thirteen years to conquer this desert, which had so long closed the real

Sudan against the white man's world. It was only when these brave men had overcome the difficulties presented by the 600 miles of desert that the true character of the Sudan became known; and even yet but few can form any true estimate or have any just conception of the resources of the Sudan country, of which ivory and ostrich feathers form, or will form, a very inconsiderable part.

From Wadi Halfa to Khartum—or from 22° north to 16° north is only 6° of latitude. If we add to this one degree more, we have covered nearly all of the desert waste of the Sudan. But against this, we have ten degrees of territory farther to the south, most of which is as fertile and productive as North Sudan is barren.

It is not a question of irrigation either, for the most of the southland comes within the circle of rainfall, and one or two cultivated crops can be grown without irrigation, and pasture is abundant almost all the year. Even though irrigation were introduced, it would not greatly affect Egypt. In Egypt they do *not* measure water by the "pint," as Mr. Steevens seems to suggest, and even with all recent improvements in irrigation works, and a possible increase in cultivated lands, it will be a long time before the present volume of flood is prevented from going out to sea.

The Sudan, however, may be practically independent of irrigation, while the very life of Egypt depends on the water distributed by its dikes and canals. Without any irrigation, the Sudan's southland possesses what equals the Nile overflow in Upper Egypt.

An irrigation system even of the simplest kind is expensive. What a great advantage then has that country which is made independent by rainfall, and which could in addition easily avail itself of all the advantages of an irrigation system.

More than forty years ago Sir Samuel Baker wrote:

"Egypt remains in the same position that nature originally allotted to her; the life-giving stream that flows through a thousand miles of burning sands suddenly rises in July, and floods the Delta which it has formed by a deposit during perhaps hundreds of thousands of similar inundations; and it wastes a superabundance of fertilizing mud in the waters of the Mediterranean. As nature has thus formed, and is still forming, a delta, why should not science create a delta with the powerful means at our disposal? Why should not the mud of the Nile, that now silts up the Mediterranean, be directed to the barren but vast area of deserts, that by such a deposit

would become a fertile portion of Egypt? This work might be accomplished by simple means: the waters of the Nile, that now rush impetuously, at certain seasons with overwhelming violence while at others they are exhausted, might be so controlled that they should never be in excess, neither would they be reduced to a minimum in the dry season; but the enormous volume of water heavily charged with soil, that now rushes uselessly into the sea, might be led throughout the deserts of Nubia and Libya, to transform them into cotton fields that would render England independent of America. . . . Were this principle carried out as far as the last cataract near Khartum, the Sudan would no longer remain a desert; the Nile would become not only the cultivator of those immense tracts that are now utterly worthless, but it would be the navigable channel of Egypt for the extraordinary distance of twenty-seven degrees of latitude—direct from the Mediterranean to Gondokoro, N. lat. 4° 54′.

"A dam across the Atbara would irrigate the entire country from Gozeragup to Berber, a distance of upwards of 200 miles; and the same system upon the Nile would carry the waters throughout the deserts between Khartum and Dongola, and from thence to Lower Egypt. The Nubian desert, from Korosko to Abu Hamed,

would be a garden, the whole of that sterile country inclosed within the great western bend of the Nile towards Dongola would be embraced in the system of irrigation, and the barren sands that now give birth to the bitter melon of the desert (*cucumis colocynthis*) would bring forth the watermelon and heavy crops of grain. . . .

"This is the way to civilize a country; the engineer will alter the hard conditions of nature, that have rendered man as barren of good works as the sterile soil upon which he lives. Let man have hope; improve the present, that his mind may look forward to a future; give him a horse that will answer to the spur if he is to run in the race of life; give him a soil that will yield and tempt him to industry; give him the means of communication with his fellow-men, that he may see his own inferiority by comparison; provide channels for the transport of his produce, and for the receipt of foreign manufactures, that will engender commerce; and then, when he has advanced so far in the scale of humanity, you may endeavor to teach him the principle of Christianity. Then, and not till then, can we hope for moral progress."

Sir Samuel Baker's opinion carries conviction, for he was not ignorant of the country of which he wrote. He knew its barrenness, but he also knew the possibilities of even the many supposed

barren places, and the sufficiency of its mighty rivers to supply its one great need.

The opinion he expressed is almost a prophecy, the fulfillment of which may not be far distant. Already the great reservoir at Assuan, and the weir at Assiut, in Egypt, are facts that promise a more complete control of the mighty Nile, and give us some conception of what may be done.

But Sir Samuel Baker's thought was that, by bringing the great deserts under cultivation, for which he held there was an abundance of water, and by building the mighty system of dams, weirs, and locks, the desert, which now excludes the civilized world and its influence from the heart of Africa, would be overcome. The black man so long "desert-locked" in the heart of Africa would be brought to a new light and life.

Still, Sir Samuel Baker could not know of all the events of the past twenty-five years: events that have carried civilization across the desert reaches, and past the numerous cataracts of the Nile, and on to the more fertile regions of the Sudan. Sir Samuel Baker did not conceive of a railroad thrown across the desert from Wadi Halfa to Khartum, thus connecting Upper Egypt with the Upper Sudan; and another from the Red Sea to Berber, bringing the commerce of Europe almost as near to Khartum as to Cairo. The

heart of Africa is now wide open to the great highway of the Nile.

The following extract from a letter written by Mr. Leigh Hunt, and published in many of the newspapers of America, will be of interest in this connection. It must be borne in mind too, that Mr. Hunt wrote from the Sudan, in November of 1903, and wrote of what he had seen and learned from personal investigation, and with all the facts before him. He says in part:

"There are millions of idle acres of land along the Nile in the Sudan capable of being developed into as fertile fields as those lower down the Nile in Egypt, which are to-day the highest priced agricultural lands in the world. I may not be able to prove to your satisfaction the correctness of my estimate of these Sudan lands, yet the proof of the same cannot long be deferred; when the conditions which prevail here are generally understood, and the Suakin-Berber railway is completed, the Sudan will need no pushing. It will gather population and develop upon its own merits. There will be no lack of men and means ready and anxious to proceed with the development of these millions of acres which now lie practically vacant. Acres that will produce abundantly of wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco, sugar-cane, millet, coffee, fruit, vegetables, and in fact almost

anything the human family needs. If you doubt my testimony, based not on guesses or hearsay, but what I have actually seen, I beg of you to study the reports of the numerous British officials who have made plain all those facts long before I ever saw the Sudan. These competent men left nothing new to discover and nothing new to tell. And you will find investigation of conditions and results in other parts of the world between like parallels of latitude, namely 22 and 5, very helpful in forming your conclusions. Gather together the best results obtainable in the Sandwich Islands, Southern Mexico, Central America, Cuba, Venezuela, Southern India, Ceylon, Burmah and the Philippines, add the effects of the fertilizing waters of this incomparable Nile, and this unsurpassed climate, and your imagination should then be equal to the task of believing what I say concerning the efficiency of these broad acres which are generally a very rich alluvial deposit of great depth. And while you are studying your map, find, if you can, a country with more than 10,000 miles of river reaches that can send her products into the markets of the world with only 300 miles of railway haul—once on the Red Sea you are practically in the markets of the world. With such a strategic position as the Suakin-Berber railway will give the Sudan, I see no reason why

England's mills should not soon be running night and day the year through on cotton of her own growing, and Sir William Garstin's advice as to wheat-growing in the Blue Nile country turned well to the advantage of the poor man's loaf.

"There are some interests that will be hard hit when Lord Cromer has completed his road from the Upper Nile cataract to the Red Sea, thus transforming this remote land, which can to-day export to advantage only articles worth their weight in gold, to what must become an accessible storehouse of plenty. The one, the fault-finding member of Parliament who dubs this the land of ivory, ostrich feathers and burning sands; another the text-book makers who taught us and are teaching our children the same miserable rot; and last, but not least, the competitors for England's food and cotton markets.

"With such a beneficent government as England gives the Sudan, with a soil as good as that of the Lower Nile, with tropical climate not to be excelled in all the world, and with facilities for irrigation and transportation such as the Nile and its branches afford, there can be but one result, when once a suitable people is found to supplement the few natives which survived the ravages of the Khalifa's rule. So terrible and far-reaching was the area of devastation in the reign of the

Dervish that it is now realized that Slatin Pasha's estimate of seventy-five per cent. loss of population is under rather than over the mark; while the balance were left impoverished and broken in spirit. If you will remember that it is scarcely five years since Kitchener fought the battle of Omdurman, I may be able by giving you one or two of the countless instances of the unspeakable savagery of the Mahdi and his successor, the Khalifa, to suggest to your mind a sufficient cause for the vacancy that exists here. The Museab tribe had seven thousand fighting men, besides old men, women and children, at the beginning of the Mahdi's reign, they now number all told eleven families. The Kababish tribe had 350,000 camels—this tribe now possesses only 3,000. The first draft made on them by the fiendish Khalifa robbed them of seventy thousand she-camels.

"Should the facts which history reveals afford you insufficient reasons for this lack of population, permit me to suggest another line of thought,—with an uncivilized people does not a fertile land beget a fiercer savagery that must in time lead to desolation, just as the garden spots of civilization beget luxury and decay?

"The great obstacle to the speedy development of the Sudan is the lack of labor. Believing

that any and all races of men will work if properly handled and directed, I am convinced that the few surviving natives of the Sudan will in time become as good workers as they were once good fighters. When they are taught a broader and better use of money; when they are taught by example that industry pays, and when they begin to appreciate fair treatment and security to life and property you will see a marvelous change in the lives of these shiftless, simple, lazy people. But even then in such regions as the Upper Blue Nile, the Sobat and the Bahr-el-Ghazal, I foresee it will take patient teaching to lift the natives above the contentment which the rain crops give—where, as in Egypt, the ambitious farmer should be satisfied with nothing less than two and three crops a year."

The Sudan land has surely been maligned. Its climate, country and its people have all been despised without reason, and the world has been led to believe it a hopeless waste or vile, death-producing swamp. It has desert and swamp, certainly. But so have Europe and the United States, and so has almost every land on the face of the earth. There are parts of Illinois, Iowa and Missouri where to-day we find the finest agricultural lands in the United States, where at one time—about sixty years ago—the conditions were as bad as they are on the White Nile, the Sobat or

the Bahr-el-Ghazal. Yes, they were even worse, for besides the malaria with which the first settlers had to contend they had the rigorous winters also. It could not be otherwise. Those who developed these and other States endured far greater hardships than will come to those who may develop the valleys of the mighty rivers of the Sudan. Once developed, the value of the Sudan land will be double that of the best in the United States.

In another letter, Mr. Hunt says:

"The Sobat country is everything you claim for it and much more. For fertility of soil, richness of climate and general interest these Baro plains excel anything that I have ever seen."

As much could be said perhaps of other sections of the country. In the development of every country much hardship and trial has been endured; the Sudan will hardly be an exception. Yet the mildness of the climate, which will allow the cultivation and production of crops for twelve months every year, will reduce the hardships to a minimum. The present commercial age also offers every advantage for speedy development. The markets of the world are open to every land and all kinds of produce. As has been stated, the lack of labor is the greatest drawback. The population is scant and the people, especially in the southland, are of the despised race. They are

savages. The development of the country by foreign influence may not be an unmixed blessing to these poor people. It may mean their ruin or annihilation or, what would be equally deplorable, they may become mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water." The present Government has certainly been kind to the people and careful of their natural rights. Savage and half-savage as they are, they do not now appreciate all this kindness. But the black man's heart is easily influenced for better things through kindness alone; quick to imitate, he can be drawn to his own ruin by the white man's vices.

The very fact that the people are mean, and wretched, and despised, is sufficient excuse for the missionary being among them, to guard them from evil and to secure to them as much of blessing as possible from the inevitable influx of European life and civilization, and from the development of their own fertile fields. This, together with their moral and spiritual uplifting, is our constant aim and hope.

XVIII

MISSIONARY CONDITIONS

The Egyptian Sudan is difficult of description in anything like general terms, for great differences occur in its racial types, its climate and the physical conditions of the different sections of this large area of country. The northern limit of the Egyptian Sudan is Wadi Halfa at about 22° N. latitude, and the southern limit is Gondokoro or within 5° of the Equator. The eastern boundary might be defined as the Red Sea, south to Abyssinia, and thence south along the western frontier of that country. The western boundary is not clearly defined, but may be roughly indicated as including the provinces of Kordofan and Darfur.

In the character of the country, we pass from barren desert to fertile river plains. In the character of the climate, from a dry desert atmosphere where rain seldom falls to the rain circle where there are heavy tropical rains forming lakes and rivers, and converting great portions of the land into perpetual swamps. As to the people, they vary in degrees and shades of color from the bronze Arab or Berberi of the north, to the

blackest of the black; and from the half-civilized to the savage living in extremest simplicity. Speaking quite generally, however, the country may be divided into Northern Sudan and Southern Sudan.

In Northern Sudan the great mass of the people are not pure negro, but are of Arab descent or admixture. They speak the Arabic language and hold to the Mohammedan religion. In Southern Sudan we have a predominance of the negro type. The people are wholly unlettered, with many tribal dialects and without a clearly defined religion or with only a sort of fetich worship. But the passing from one of these conditions to another is so gradual that it is simply a shading off in life, in religious thought, and in color of skin. And the whole mass of the people is ignorant and superstitious. As to which class has the advantage over the other—the half-civilized Mohammedan or the savage negro—there is hardly a question.

When the Arabs came into the Sudan they conquered the blacks of Northern Sudan, made them their slaves and concubines, and soon the whole black population of Northern Sudan and the Blue Nile region became absorbed into the Arab race. The Arabs have ever been slave-raiders and slave-dealers and were constantly adding slaves and concubines to their possessions. This had the effect

of changing not only their color of skin and their features, but also their religious thought and life. It did not, however, change their bigotry, for the Mohammedans of the Sudan have been most ignorant. Few of them ever learned to read, and those who did, read only the Koran and kindred Mohammedan literature. The very conditions begot bigotry and superstition in the people.

The Christians of this section are very inconsiderable in number, and as ignorant and superstitious as their Mohammedan neighbors. In this estimate, of course, I do not mean to include Christians who have come into the Sudan since the events of the Mahdi rebellion. These, however, will not number more than a few hundred. Of those who were there before the rebellion, there were Copts from Egypt, Abyssinians, Greeks, and a few Syrians, nearly all of whom were very ignorant. Some of these in course of time embraced the Mohammedan religion, especially during the Mahdi's reign and that of the Khalifa, his successor. Many of the Abyssinians, especially those taken as prisoners of war, women and children, are yet to be found in the families of the Mohammedans.

Besides these there are many representatives of the black tribes, brought down from the south either as slaves or by the Mahdi and his successor.

So to-day, the population of Northern Sudan forms a motly crowd of color and form.

Nearly all the inhabitants of Northern Sudan, whether Mohammedan, Christian, or pagan, have learned something of the Arabic language and the Mohammedan religion. Missionary work for these people will not differ greatly from that carried on in Egypt; viz.: Christian educational work, coupled with organized preaching of the Gospel. Industrial work might also be of great advantage in many places.

The Government has undertaken educational work along certain lines. But the Government schools, as in Egypt, are distinctly Mohammedan and therefore do not serve the purpose of the Christian missionary. Indeed, they make the Christian school all the more necessary and create greater difficulty.

This, in brief, is the condition in Northern Sudan. The difficulties are many, but the outlook is not hopeless. Wider liberty has been given the Christian missionary than was at first allowed, and, at present at least, they have the fullest sympathy of many of the officials.

At present there are no Protestant missionaries in Northern Sudan except at Khartum, the capital. Strategically, this city is an important point from which to work out into other remoter

districts. Both the Church Missionary Society of London, England, and the United Presbyterian Church of North America have missionaries there: five in all. There is a mission school for both boys and girls in Khartum, another for boys across the White Nile in Omdurman, and one at Wadi Halfa. Others may soon be begun. Preaching services are also regularly conducted at Khartum, Omdurman, Halfaiyah, and occasionally at Berber, Wadi Halfa and other points.

In Southern Sudan, the country south of Khartum, conditions are quite different. The Arabic-speaking population, and consequently the Mohammedan religion, ceases to become a factor. Here we find these black people whose condition, and life, and religious thought I have attempted to describe in previous chapters. These represent many different tribes, all black people, inhabiting the Upper White Nile, the Sobat River, the Bahr-el-Ghazal, the Bahr-el-Gebal and the Bahr-el-Arab districts—a vastly more fertile country, but a more savage people. They have their tribal dialects or languages, and are without any sort of civilized life.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty which confronts the missionary is the multitude of languages used by these many tribes. These must be mastered, in some measure at least, before effective missionary

work can be accomplished. And even then, a serious difficulty is encountered in the expression of abstract thought, and in inculcating the truths of the Christian religion owing to the meagre vocabulary which these languages possess.

On the other hand, these negro tribes are not prejudiced against the name and religion of Jesus, as is the Mohammedan everywhere. They are more simple and more easily influenced for good *or evil*. Kind treatment will draw the hearts of whole tribes to the missionary and, through him, to better things. The one great dread of the missionary is the coming among them of a class of evil-minded and vicious traders, who would, in a very great measure at least, counteract every good the missionary might attempt. Therefore, industrial work,—trade in their produce, instruction in the simpler arts and, above all, in tilling their great fertile fields—should become an important part of missionary instruction. Thus, if possible and as far as possible, any hurtful class of men should be barred from among them.

The population at present is not very great; but since tribal wars must cease with a better government, and slave-raiding is abolished, the population may be expected to increase very rapidly. It should then be the purpose to gain these people at once, and thus insure the increase

of population for Christ. Missionaries, in force sufficient to go up and down these great waterways, buying and selling, teaching and preaching, and above all living the life and Gospel of Jesus Christ, might in a reasonable time accomplish the redemption of these people.

At present there is but one Protestant Mission station south of Khartum, where are two missionaries with their wives. It is the mission with which the reader of these pages has become familiar—for they have given the story of its beginnings. This station is that of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and is located near the mouth of the Sobat River. To accomplish the work which has been suggested as possible, an adequate force of workers is needed with boats and steam launches to facilitate travel. It is not improbable that through such agencies these black tribes may be won long before their Mohammedan neighbors of the North.

We have mentioned elsewhere the climate. This must be taken account of in considering mission work. We believe that, although the climate of any part of the Sudan is trying, it is possible for the white man to live there and do good work. Frequent changes may be necessary to preserve health, and make possible the best work.

Excessive heat in the North and excessive mois-

ture in the South are the two greatest trials of the white man, arising from climatic conditions, but these conditions do not prevail all the year. There are always a few months in the year that bring relief from these. The monotony of the work is, perhaps, more trying on the nerves, and has more to do with producing "the Sudan temper" than the climate. As the country develops, too, these conditions will be improved. Better dwellings, better food and all the comforts and conveniences of life come along with improved commerce and transportation. These are coming rapidly to the Sudan. Engineers and men of commerce will risk their lives for a little paltry gain. Surely then there will be men and women courageous enough to take similar risks, whatever they be, to bring to these Sudanese tribes the glad tidings of salvation.

XIX

DARKNESS AND DAWN

"Ah, the land of the rustling of wings,
Which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia;
That sendeth ambassadors by the sea,
Even in vessels of papyrus upon the waters:

"Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation tall and smooth,
To a people terrible from their beginning onward;
A nation that meteth out and treadeth down,
Whose land the rivers divide.

"All ye inhabitants of the world, and ye dwellers on the earth, when an ensign is lifted up on the mountains, see ye; and when the trumpet is blown, hear ye. For thus hath the Lord said unto me, I will be still, and I will behold in my dwelling place; like clear heat in sunshine, like a cloud of dew in the heat of harvest. For afore the harvest, when the blossom is over, and the flower becometh a ripening grape, he shall cut off the sprigs with pruninghooks, and the spreading branches shall he take away and cut down. They shall be left together unto the ravenous birds of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them. In that time shall a present be brought unto the Lord of hosts

" . . . of a people tall and smooth,
And from a people terrible from their beginning onward;
A nation that meteth out, and treadeth down,
Whose land the rivers divide—
To the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion."

—*Isaiah*, chap. xviii., "Modern Reader's Bible."

To one who has lived in the Sudan, and is acquainted with its history, so striking is the correspondence between Isaiah's prophecy concerning the "land which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" and both past history and present conditions in the Egyptian Sudan, that one is almost led to believe that the prophet was personally acquainted with the land which he so vividly described.

He calls it the "land which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia." It is not difficult to identify Ethiopia, for "to the ancients it represented all the land bounded by the Upper Nile on the west, and the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf on the east; the southern extremity they did not profess to be able to fix." At least the northern portion of this territory had a clearly-defined civilization, and was organized into a kingdom of considerable power and influence, with Napata, and later Meroe, as its capital, and standing now in subjection to, now in hostility to, and again in alliance with, the kingdom of Egypt to the north.

The rivers of this land of Ethiopia are, therefore, the Atbara, the Blue Nile, and their tributaries. Northern Sudan is, therefore, identical with Ethiopia of old, and the southern portion, which lies just beyond the rivers of Ethiopia mentioned above, is the land described in this

prophecy. It, in turn, however, is described as a land which "the rivers divide," and a glance at the map will justify the description. To the east is the Sobat River, whose sources have not yet been explored, but which lead us into the mountainous regions of southern Abyssinia. To the south and west the White Nile itself breaks into innumerable streams, giving literal correspondence in fact to the statements of the prophet. It is only in recent times that our acquaintance with the geography of this entire region has been lifted out of mere conjecture. Were not the ancients better informed as to this country than are we even to-day?

The prophet designates "the land which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia" as "the land of the rustling of wings." All that vast region is resonant with bird and insect life. Everywhere one goes great flocks of birds line the banks of rivers or lakes, or fill the air, and are actually shadowing the ground. I can give no complete list of them, but those found in great flocks are the stork, crane, pelican, flamingo, bustard, florican, guinea-fowl, goose, or duck, partridge, diver, and many others the names of which I have never learned.

The vulture tribes are especially numerous, as also flamingo and pelican, geese and duck, and at their migrating season the swish of their wings may be heard almost constantly. Beside the

larger birds which we have mentioned, some of which stand several feet high, the banks of the river and streams swarm with small birds that go down to drink or nest near the water. Especially when the top of the tall grass is full of seed are these chirping and twittering birds most numerous. The tiny creatures seem to take no rest except at night, and even then they are easily disturbed. On a moonlight night, as our boatmen towed us near the bank, the rope bent down the tall, slender reeds and canes, and the birds, startled, flew in great flocks, and when all else was still, the sound of their wings and their frightened twitter was like the flowing of water over rocks, and this continued for miles of our travel. In the daytime they are constantly disturbed by man and beast, while the falcon and hawk pursue them at all times and in every direction, and they get no rest, swirling in the air like leaves caught up and carried about in a whirlwind. Certainly, it is well-named "the land of the rustling of wings."

A rallying of the clans by means of messengers sent hastily along the rivers gives us a description of some of the customs of the people. They "send messengers by the sea and in vessels of papyrus by the waters." Here as elsewhere (see Nahum 3:8, Isaiah 19:5, Job 41:31) the word translated "sea" may be rendered "river"—to

this day the Nile bearing this name, el-Bahr. On the Upper Nile then and its tributaries so full of papyrus, they had numerous small boats constructed of the tall, light stems of that plant; even in the present time the tribes of black people along these rivers construct such light craft, although the most of their boats are long canoes dug out of the trunks of trees. In many places along the White Nile and its tributaries there is also a wood called *ambatch*, which is lighter than cork; of this the people make rafts and use it in crossing the rivers and for communication along the streams.

The people are described as "tall and smooth." Who has not been impressed with the magnificent physical development of these negro tribes, especially of the Shullas and Anyoks of the Sobat region—six feet tall, six feet six many of them, broad-shouldered, athletic, with skin as smooth as polished ebony.

"A people terrible from their beginning onward, a nation that meteth out and treadeth down." Absolutely fearless in battle, placing little estimate on life, of undaunted courage and savage cruelty, the description of the prophet is abundantly borne out by the records of war written on the temples of Ancient Egypt, as also by the chronicles of the recent Mahdi rebellion.

Such are some of the many realistic touches which this obscure prophecy possesses.

The prophecy itself clearly presents two contrasting pictures: A dark vision of war and desolation, which at last gives way to a bright vision of peace and redemption.

Whatever partial fulfilment the dark prophecy of desolation had in earlier centuries, a striking fulfilment of it is at hand in the recent desolations of the Mahdi movement. "They shall be left together," says the prophet, "unto the ravenous birds of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the ravenous birds shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them." What better commentary can be found upon this passage than the record of events under Mahdism. Those that escaped the sword in battle, disease claimed, and those that escaped death by disease, famine claimed, until—think of it!—in two brief decades the population was reduced from ten million to two and a half-million.

To those who are not familiar with events in the Sudan from 1881 to 1898, we earnestly advise that they read such books as "Fire and Sword in the Sudan," by Slatin Pasha; "Ten Years in the Mahdi's Camp," by Father Ohrwalder; "The Journals of Major-General Gordon, at Khartum," or "With Kitchener to Khartum," by

Steevens. As we acquaint ourselves with the events of the Mahdi movement; as we see hundreds slain in cold blood, the victims of a merciless tyranny; as we see thousands perishing of famine, the result of hopeless misrule; the White Nile bringing down the bodies of those who died in the interior while the dead lie unburied in the very streets of the city of Omdurman; as we watch hundreds of thousands perishing in the vain effort to stem the tide of Kitchener's victorious campaigns; as we add to these horrors the slaughters of the war with Abyssinia; as we thus see three-fourths of the population of the Sudan wiped out of existence in two brief decades, we are ready to confess that nothing seems lacking in the fulfillment of this prophecy of desolation! "They shall be left together unto the ravenous birds of the mountains, and to the beasts of the earth; and the ravenous birds shall summer upon them and all the beasts of the earth shall winter upon them."

Slatin Pasha, in referring to the battle of the Dervishes with the Abyssinians, says: "The road between Gallabat and Abu Haraz was strewn with corpses." And again: "The rush of the Abyssinian force, which was ten times as strong as that of Arbab, was terrible; in a few minutes the Mahdi's forces were completely surrounded,

Arbab himself killed, and almost all his troops massacred, only a few escaping. Galabat itself was burned to the ground; and for a long time its site was little else than a great open cemetery, the abode of nothing save hyenas."

The further havoc wrought by famine is vividly described by Father Ohrwalder: "The awful scenes enacted by the starving inhabitants in the market place at Omdurman are beyond description. People flocked from Berber, Kassala, Galabat, and Karkoj, thinking that the distress would be less there than in the provinces, but here they were quite mistaken. As one walked along one could count fifty dead bodies lying in the streets, and this quite irrespective of those who died in their own homes. Although the famine swept off hundreds, still the people poured in from the provinces. Dervishes, who had heaped insults on the Turks during the seige of El-Obeid for eating donkeys and other unclean animals, were now feeling Heaven's vengeance, for not only did they eat unclean animals, but their own children as well. There were so many dead bodies about that it was not possible to bury them all. At first they used to bury them within the city, but the Khalifa put a stop to this, and they were then taken out to the northwest side, and up to this day, if anyone walks in that direction, he will find the plain scat-

tered with innumerable skulls and human bones, which lie there glistening in the sun, as white as snow; the driving sand and burning sun have polished them like glass."

"How many were carried away, God only knows. The scent of the dead bodies brought hyenas everywhere; and they became so bold that they would come up almost to my door. As for vultures, their name was legion, but even they, with the help of all the hyenas, were unable to consume all the bodies.

"Around Galabat the hyenas became so bold, that they would sneak into the villages almost before the sun was down, and drag off the wretched half-dead people. Out of Zeki's force of eighty-seven thousand souls before the famine, there remained, after it was over, only ten thousand, including women and children. Korkoj and Sennar, which were generally called the granaries of the Sudan, were desolated by famine. It was, indeed, Heaven's terrible retribution on a people who had practiced untold cruelties and shed rivers of innocent blood."

But Isaiah's prophecy does not close in darkness. Darkness gives way to light. The dawn of a millennial day is foretold: "In that time shall a present be brought unto the Lord of hosts

" . . . of a people tall and smooth,
And from a people terrible from their beginning onward;
A nation that meteth out, and treadeth down,
Whose land the rivers divide—
To the place of the name of the Lord of hosts, the Mount Zion."

When shall these things be? With the Church of Christ lies the answer, as unto her has been committed the gospel of redemption that she may evangelize the world. God by his providence has prepared the way for an early realization of this part of the Isaianic prophecy. To this end has He brought into supreme control in the Sudan a Christian nation. The power and the glory of the kingdom of Ethiopia long ago departed from her. The people once "terrible from the beginning onward;" which once meted out and trod down others, are now a nation broken by centuries of oppression, devastated by decades of slavery, and all but annihilated by years of warfare. Broken, bruised, disappointed, betrayed, the Sudanese nation lies helpless at the feet of the Christian Church. Isaiah foretells the true restoration; the prophet Zephaniah too looks forward to a redemption. Why do we not arise to realize these prophecies and give them the Gospel of Christ, that their darkness may be turned into glorious day? "For," says Zephaniah in the name of the Lord, "then will I turn to the peoples

a pure language, that they will call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve him with one consent. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia shall they bring my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, for an offering unto me." (Marginal Reading.) And Isaiah adds: "In that time shall a present be brought unto the Lord of hosts

> " . . . of a people tall and smooth,
> And from a people terrible from their beginning onward;
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